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AS

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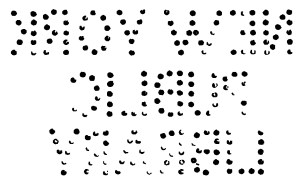

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PREFACE.

Lest the title of this book should suggest to the reader the idea of fiction, the author would remark, that it has been chosen solely from its identification with the sober facts and reflections with which its pages are filled, and which he trusts will be found not the *less interesting* because they are true.

These facts and reflections are the result of careful investigation and research, continued through a period of eighteen months, and challenge the severest scrutiny. That there are no mistakes, would be quite too much to affirm, but that there are none which should seriously affect the character of the work, the author confidently believes.

But one design pervades the book, viz., to furnish a test by which to estimate the value of the institutions of our own country.

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THE MUD CABIN.

CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTORY.

I HAD read books of travel, and delighted to read them, enough, one would think, to familiarize me with all the old world has to show; and yet, upon coming here, I found myself as entirely in a new world to me, as though I had not read a word about it. There are many reasons why.

Every man, and of course every author, has his proclivities, certain habitudes of thought and of feeling, which are his own and no one's else. And governed by these, travellers naturally divide themselves off into different departments of inquiry, which are so numerous, that each investigator may have one almost entirely to himself.

And even those who enter the same department of inquiry, do not see the same objects. What would put one man into ecstasies, would be passed unnoticed by another Hence, one man fills his casket with gems, which another

has trampled under his feet; the richest deposits of gold are sometimes found right in the track of the miner.

Nor do those who see the same objects, in the same department of inquiry, see the same things in those objects, or learn from them the same lessons; one viewing them from this point of observation, and another from that, one looking upon them isolated and alone, and another in their bearings and connections, and each through the medium of his own peculiar views and feelings.

These things are not said to establish any claim to superiority for the subject matter of these pages, but solely to show how inevitably different persons will fall into different strains of remark, in passing over these broad fields of observation.

But though one may, and should have a controlling power of the mind, which will lead him to concentrate and expend his researches upon a particular department of inquiry, this need not hinder him from borrowing light from every other, and will not.

There is always, perhaps, some danger, in pursuing any subject of investigation, that mists of prejudice will rise from the heart to becloud the intellect, and shut out the sun-light of truth; but against all such dangers I have endeavored to guard, for I should be sorry to be stranded in a fog.

I am free to confess, that amid all the interesting scenes which have opened upon my observation here, to bewilder and to charm, but one engrossing subject has occupied my attention, from first to last, viz. *the character and condition of*

the people, as affected by the institutions of the country, viewed in the light of the contrast which my own beloved country presents.

This one subject has haunted me by day and by night, and all the beautiful things, and all the wonderful things I have seen and admired here, have been powerless to charm it away. Nay; as I have stood entranced before these beautiful and wonderful things, the soft and silent whisper has never failed to come stealing upon my thoughts, "Are these things the true exponents of national greatness? Is it here that we are to look for the development of the great ends of government, and for its crowning glories?"

And then there would loom up before me, as in a vast cloud, myriads upon myriads of human beings, arrayed in the forbidding aspect of want, and seeming to say, "*Look on us*, if you would learn the true value of the institutions of the country."

I did look, and wondered that the national vision could be so perverted as to see little things to be great, and great things to be little. And I marvelled too, that so many of our own people should so far yield to the spell, upon coming here, as to have all their sympathies drawn out in behalf of a class of objects which, though deserving of regard, are but as the baubles of children in comparison—that they should be so bewildered by the glitter of the throne, and of the satellites that revolve around it, as to be struck blind to the miseries it costs to keep those bright and beautiful orbs shining —that they should be so light and volatile in the midst of starving want, and think only of chasing from palace to

palace in quest of wonders and of romance, entirely overlooking the greatest wonder of all.

There have been some faithful witnesses here—some who have not been ashamed nor afraid to testify. They have done a good work, honor to their memories! But so vast, so complicated, and so *mystified* is the subject, that there is ample room left for investigation and research, without trenching upon the ground occupied by others.

Those who expect to find this book an exponent of national prejudices, a mere tirade against the institutions of the Old World, will, perhaps, be disappointed. From beginning to end, it consists of one continued appeal to the understanding, the conscience, and the heart, sustained by facts and reasonings which unsophisticated childhood could not fail to comprehend and appreciate. If there is any severity about it, it is the severity of truth and of reason alone.

It might be supposed that there must be monotony and dulness in a book confined to the investigation of a single subject. Not necessarily so, especially if the subject be one which admits of a wide range of illustration. In the present instance, some of the most interesting passages of human history have been laid under contribution; and besides, I have been compelled to look into the secrets of the entire structure of society, and of the government, in search of the causes which have produced such disastrous results; and yet, I trust that nothing will be found in any of the investigations I have instituted, which is not level to the commonest understanding; and I may go farther, and say—which is not fruitful in entertainment as well as instruction—should it be found otherwise, I shall have come utterly short.

And yet every thing in the book is sober truth; most rigidly have I confined myself to a statement of facts, which, for the most part, came under my own personal observation, and the correctness of which I have had every facility for testing. But they are facts, which have lain, to a great extent, without the range of common observation.

This book neither claims consideration nor asks indulgence. Its publication was not of my seeking. Some letters I had written had been published, and so numerous and earnest were the appeals which came back to me for a book upon the subjects embraced in those letters, and from such sources did they emanate, that I finally consented to come forward and make my bow as an author.

At the same time, I had convictions within me which panted for utterance. Often, amid the abominations of these old countries, have I coveted gifts of utterance, equal to the task of impressing my convictions, warmed into activity by what I saw, upon every living soul throughout the length and breadth of our land! These abominations are so far away, and so dimly are they shadowed forth upon the printed page, that they fail altogether of that stirring effect upon our people, which a vivid conception of the reality would produce. And if I can succeed in adding any thing to the vividness of that conception, and, more than all, if it were possible for me to raise such a glow upon these pages, as would show off the contrast in the institutions of the two countries, and their effects respectively upon human weal, with all the power of a reality rising upon the vision, I should be the happiest of men. Then would our people

know and understand their privileges—then would they realize the responsibilities of their position as the only people upon the wide earth, whose institutions are a shield to the God-given rights of humanity—and then would they rouse themselves to duty as the depositories of a trust so sacred.

And what a sight it is for Heaven to look down upon, to see a great people, rising up under its own auspices, deliberately taking the reins of government into their own hands, and guiding it safely, quietly, and triumphantly through all difficulties to a glorious destiny, while the masses in all the world besides, under the combined influence of ignorance, superstition, and vice, basely bow the neck to the heel of power, and grovel out existence as passive under their burdens as the donkey or the mule!

And from whom, and from what quarter comes the remonstrance, that such exposures will only have the effect to widen the breach between two countries, which should ever be bound together by the ties of reciprocal good will? Who, that has an American heart in his bosom, does not agree with me, that a temporizing, compromising spirit towards the institutions of the Old World, would be fatal alike to the healthful development of our own, and to their influence upon the nations of the earth? Who does not agree with me, that if there is ever to be a cordial and abiding bond of union between us and any of the nations of the old world, they must come to us—that we cannot go to them? And who does not agree further with me, that in order to this, the fogs must be blown away, that we may see clearly where each stands respectively?

Gladly would I have said only pleasant things of England—*there* are the graves of my ancestors; and of all the nations of the earth, next to my own, it has ever held the uppermost place in my regards. From my infancy up, I was taught to lisp the name of England with an almost superstitious veneration, and my heart fairly palpitated with emotion, as I set foot upon her shores. If any thing were wanting to fill up the measure of my good will to the brim, and cause it to "run over," it has certainly been supplied in the many kindnesses I have received, and the hospitalities I have enjoyed here.

But because there are kind hearts and hospitable roofs in England, are we to shut our ears to the cries of her oppressed and suffering children? To be grateful on the one hand, must we be inhuman on the other?

CHAPTER II.

STORM UPON THE OCEAN, WRITTEN JUST BEFORE LANDING IN ENGLAND.

I HAVE been so tumbled over and mixed up since I have been upon the ocean, that I know not whether I shall be able to get out an idea right side up. "Life on the ocean wave" is very pretty in the parlor, but very different is the music of the storm.

I had been tossed up and down our inland seas, and had enjoyed the wild sport of their truant waters, as they played responsive to the tempest; I had dashed along the Atlantic coast, and witnessed the war of the elements off those capes which are the terror of the mariner; but I had a desire to look further abroad upon this vast reservoir of waters—to get out upon its heaving bosom, and far away from coast or island against which to be dashed, to see Old Ocean lashed into fury, shaking his hoary locks, and roaring in terrible wrath.

And is there wrong in such a desire? In a well-built and well-managed ship, in mid-ocean, there is little to apprehend; and then, what though in the prosecution of the great ends of life, we find a grave beneath the billows, could we not sleep as sweetly there as beneath the "clods of the valley," aye, and wake as readily, and rise as triumphantly,

in the resurrection morn, at the sound of the last trump? There are gems in that "pearly deep" which are yet to glitter in the diadem of the Saviour.

Well, I have had my desire; I have witnessed a storm upon the ocean; and although too near the British coast for absolute safety, all was well, for all ended well.

Imagine one of the finest mornings that ever rose upon the world. How placidly sleeps the mighty deep beneath the beams of the rising sun! How gently heaves its broad bosom, as it rests in its quiet slumbers; and how sweetly the soft and mellow breeze plays upon and kisses its many-dimpled cheek! Gentle, lovely ocean, how like a lamb thou art! And thou, soft and sighing zephyr, how like those, methinks, which fanned the walks of Eden! But look yonder—see the gathering tempest, higher and higher it rises, onward and onward it rolls—blackness shrouds the heavens, and the sleeping abyss awakes, and boils like a pot; and our noble ship, see how she drives before the storm, pitching, tumbling, careening and righting, again, and again, and again, as though a mere plaything for the elements. And see that monster wave approaching, and hear the stunning blow, which sends what seems a death quiver through all her length; but she holds on her course, now lifting up her noble prow high above the raging billows, and now plunging it beneath the foaming abyss, now giving way, and accommodating herself to the resistless force of the waves, and now gallantly meeting them, and ploughing her way through them, while they meet and dash around her, and sweep in fury over her decks, burying her in a liquid

grave; but see, she comes out like a duck, and again dances upon the raging waters.

Come now with me, and sit here upon this sofa, and, holding fast, look up through the skylight of the ship, and what do you see? That mountain wave hanging over her, and threatening to swallow her up, presses upon her, but she gently careens upon her side, it passes underneath her, and in a moment she is riding proudly upon its back.

But hold! what is the matter now? The ship has been tripped up, and has fallen into "the troughs of the sea," and you would think the great globe itself were rocking upon its axis beneath you. There she lies, rolling like a log, at the mercy of the waves, having apparently given up the struggle, and resigned herself to her fate. But wait; she is only watching her opportunity, and at the lucky moment she darts out like an eel, and is again battling with the storm.

And now the dreaded time had come for night to hang her gloomy curtains around us; and I confess that a shadow passed over my soul as the last rays of the cheerful light of day went out in the darkness of that dreadful night. There was no abatement of the storm, but rather the spirit of the tempest seemed to gather up his energies, and to come down upon us with accumulated power as the darkness of night thickened around us. The wind seemed let loose with increased fury "at every breath of the tempest," and our gallant ship staggered and reeled as she worried her devious way amid the billows, which broke more and more fiercely upon her as the darkness of night increased.

And what a scene within!—children screamed, women shrieked, and stout hearts quailed.

At this fearful crisis, I crawled to the door, and looked out, and O what a scene! The tempest howled from above, the deep bellowed from beneath, and our trusty ship, now riding upon a mountain wave, in a moment pitched from it, and went down, down, down—surely, thought I, at the instant, as the dark waves lifted themselves up on high all around—surely she is going to the bottom now; but she rose like a cork, and not a wave was suffered to come near her decks. Nobly did she rise that time, and sublimely stride her way over the opposing billow. But this was only one of a constant succession of her triumphs; and the anxious inquiry seemed to sit upon every lip, "*How long* will she be able to hold out?" "Will she never tire and give up the struggle?" These were questions which I was willing to leave to herself to answer, for I felt assured that she would "outride the storm."

In the excitement of the occasion, I had forgotten that I was a sick man. I retired to my berth exhausted, but with difficulty kept myself in. It verily seemed as though the elements had broken loose from all controlling power, and, rushing back into old chaos, were tossing the ship hither and thither in the wild uproar. Heavily and gloomily passed away the first hours of that dismal night.

But they were doled out to us at last as far as midnight, when there were some indications that the fury of the storm was near being spent. And so it was verily: gradually, the wind lulled away; the commotion without and within sub-

sided by slow degrees, and the elements, as though tired and exhausted, settled down in calm repose. Morning broke, and O what a morning that was! and the sun, as he rose in placid beauty, and flung his mild beams upon the glassy deep, as it rolled quietly and lazily around us—did ever so beauteous an orb rise upon the world before? And the faces all lighted up, and the voices too so sweetly mingling their congratulations, O what a contrast to the look and the howl of the previous night! From many a lip fell that morning audible expressions of gratitude and praise to that great and good Being, whose "way is in the whirlwind and in the storm," and who yet had kept us as "in the hollow of his hand."

And yet, terrific as was the scene, and reluctant as I should be to pass through another such, I must say that I enjoyed it not a little. Having, as I supposed at the time, all the sea-room that heart could wish, and with full confidence in our commander, and in the strength of his magnificent ship, I felt almost as secure as though I had been in Noah's Ark, especially when I remembered that the Great Jehovah was himself riding upon the storm, with his hand resting calmly upon the helm.

But how changed the scene! Silently, gently, and yet rapidly we are wafted on our way, and in due time the mountains of Cornwall rise in the blue distance, and presently we enter the Bristol Channel, with the verdant hills of Devonshire and Somersetshire upon our right, and the green fields and mountains of Wales upon our left. And now we enter the Avon, upon whose banks hundreds of

sheep are nibbling the green herbage; and now an iron river-steamer (a little sharp-pointed thing) darts by us like a fish, and another, and another, and another, going hither and thither. And here rise the ledges, hundreds of feet almost perpendicularly up; and there sits Clifton perched upon them, regarded as the most romantic place in all England, rising, as it does, from tide-water, street after street, to the very summit, one row of buildings peering above and overlooking another. It is a great watering-place. And here is Bristol.

CHAPTER III.

INITIATORY IMPRESSIONS.

And this is England, the very soil itself of England, which I had so *longed* to set eyes on, and which had such a sacredness about it three thousand miles away. But the charm has all vanished now, and I find that English dirt is just like American dirt, and is put to just about the same uses. They have black dirt, red dirt, gray, brown, and yellow dirt, just as we have, and no better. Surely, it is distance that lends enchantment; and yet not always, for multitudes, who have every opportunity to know better, seem to labor under the delusion, that the earth out of which certain orders here are formed, is a great deal better than any other, and who would be shocked at the idea, that the occupant of the palace and the throne, and the tenants of the mud hovel, are made from one and the same lump. And having seen some specimens of the latter, I confess that I do not so much wonder at the delusion, for such "*looking* objects" I never beheld before. They remind me of Shakspeare's "forked radish, with a head fantastically carved with a knife." Surely, thought I, they must have sat as the original for that picture.

Specimens of the former I have not yet seen, and of

course I cannot say how far I might be brought under the same delusion. I greatly fear, however, that I shall be thrown off so far upon the opposite extreme by the republican antipathies to which I was born, that I shall not be prepared to award them the consideration which is really their due; an injustice from which I pray that I may be kept. Already these antipathies have shown a wakefulness which alarms me; they revolt at the adulation the high orders receive from every lip, the "graven images" erected to them, and the memorials of them inscribed upon every thing around, upon the signs of the hotels and shops, upon every corner of the streets, and, I had almost said, upon the very "bells of the horses." Why, within one half hour after my arrival, I was directed, in reply to inquiries, to go up Prince-street, cross King-street, go down Charlotte-street, cross Duke-street, pass the Queen's Place, &c., &c.;—quite an overdose for my republican stomach, to begin with.

I have spoken of Clifton, sitting upon a cliff, which is properly a part of Bristol, being joined to it. I have just been climbing its heights, on a visit to the Zoological Gardens, where I found all sorts of "beasts and fowls, and creeping things," with trees and shrubbery, and grass-plats, and gravel walks, and little lakes and islands, and in the midst, a fountain in full play. Beautiful, beautiful! Why have we no such things, thought I, in our American cities, not even in New-York, with its six or seven hundred thousand inhabitants?

And then the thought came over me, that we are a *utilitarian* people, and that it is our great distinction, that with us labor is in honor, and idleness in disgrace; while here the

order of things is reversed, and idleness is crowned with glory and honor, and labor sits in disgrace at her feet.

And honorable idleness must have palaces, and parks, and gardens, and groves, and fountains, and statuary, and paintings, and race-horses, and hunting-horses, and hounds, and all the various appliances appertaining to a life of luxurious ease; and *labor* must furnish them, while it is itself thrust out as an unclean thing.

Far distant be the day, when our country shall come to this. At the same time, I would respectfully suggest, whether we are not inclining a little too far to the opposite extreme—whether even *true* utilitarianism itself does not require some relaxation from business, some diversion of the mind from the perplexities of life, some unbending of its energies, some regard to matters of taste, some appreciation of the beauties and sublimities of nature and of art.

May not labor enjoy all these, and yet sacrifice none of the honors with which she is crowned by our people? She may, nor descend one step from her high position. There is a golden mean, which would open to her all these sources of enjoyment, without endangering her enviable supremacy. Aye, and I will go further, and say, that she alone has a right to them, and she alone can duly appreciate them. What zest can opulent indolence have for such things? No, no, it is not in the nature of things; if labor is a curse, idleness is doubly cursed, and yawns its life away in fruitless longings for enjoyments which are only given as a premium upon honest toil. An oasis in the desert is not more refreshing to the weary traveller, than are such things to the labor-

ing man; while the man who lives in idleness upon his toil, with his collapsed and shrunken capacities for enjoyment, pants in vain for the same sensations of pleasure.

Bristol is a very old place, and contains now about 170,000 inhabitants. It is signalized as the place where that incarnate fiend, old King John, perpetrated some of his greatest villanies. It was here that he kept Queen Eleanor imprisoned forty years in a castle; and here that he imprisoned the Jew Abraham in the same castle, and had one tooth a day knocked out of him, until he consented to pay the enormous sum demanded; which cruelties, with multitudes of others, aroused the feudal barons to resistance; which resistance ended in wrenching from the royal monster what is called *Magna Charta*, a sort of constitution, complacently denominated by the people, *the citadel of their rights;* an instrument, by the way, which exalted, not the people, but the barons, to supremacy, and placed both monarch and people very much at their mercy. A great and important step it undoubtedly was, in the circumstances of the case; but the wonder to me is, that these people should be so very amiable, as to be satisfied with a single step or two taken in one of the darkest eras of human history, and should be content to wait so many centuries for another. And a greater wonder still is, that in this era of the world, there should be multitudes here, who seem to think, that political institutions given them by a semi-barbarous age, are the best they could possibly have; institutions which pamper profligate indolence, and starve honest labor. But this

subject will receive illustration from time to time, as I proceed.

I will only add, that this town is famous as the birth-place and home of Sebastian Cabot, the great navigator, of Admiral Penn, and of Hannah More.

CHAPTER IV.

EXCURSIONS AMONG THE RURAL VILLAGES AND MUD HOVELS OF ENGLAND—SPECTACLES WITNESSED.

Let us commence with the poor workingman. As a *means* he is every thing here, as an *end* nothing. From the means we will pass to the end, at which we shall arrive in due time.

And first, my attention was attracted to the field mummies of England, the same which tenanted these hovels and plied their daily task in these fields centuries ago—the same in appearance, in character, and in destiny. I think I have succeeded in initiating myself, to a good degree, into the mysteries of the class—mysteries as profound as ever reposed in the depths of the human heart.

In the first place they are barricaded, as a class, and regard themselves as sacred from intrusion, just as much as the nobility themselves do, being, in their domestic economy, reduced as much below as those favored ones are raised above the range of all curious eyes. And besides, in their intellectual and moral darkness, they are frightened at the footsteps of a stranger, and instinctively recoil from all scrutinizing eyes.

A cottage embowered in trees, or overgrown with ivy, makes a very pretty figure in a pencil sketch, and it requires but a slight dash of romance to finish out the picture, and make it the abode of every virtue, and of every enjoyment. And thus these rustic villages have figured in the pictures which have formerly been drawn of the landscape scenery of England. But, alas! how sad a reverse does the reality present!

The first of these villages I approached, shed down a charm upon me in the distance, from the rising ground on which it was located, but as I drew near, all its attractions vanished away. In piles and in pools stood accumulations of filth, directly in front of the cottages, as though designed as a defence against intrusion.

Before me stood a dilapidated hovel, its mud walls cracked, bilged, and leaning, and its thatched roof partly fallen away. Stepping inside the door, I found but a single apartment, ten or twelve feet square, and that cold, dark, damp, and comfortless. Under the roof was a loft where parents and children slept, through which I could look, in places, right up into the open sky.

In the room were two broken chairs, a stool, a bench, and an old chest, a small kettle, some broken crockery upon a shelf, a broken pitcher upon the window-sill, and what seemed a table, supported in part against the wall, the whole being shrouded in twilight gloom at noon-day, light gaining admission through the crevices, while the window was darkened with rags.

But there were more forbidding objects than these—

there were the mother and six children—the former haggard and wan, with a sepulchral cough, and both mother and children the very pictures of want. Three of the latter sat huddled in one corner, gazing upon me in vacant, almost idiotic wonder. I asked them if they could read, to which they made no reply, but the mother spoke and said, "They goes to Sunday school sometime, but they not learns to read."

But you appear to be very sick, said I to the woman. "Yes," she replied, "I's been sick long time. I was workin' in the field, and master was drea'ful put to it in his harvest; the weather was so awful catchin', and we worked so hard that day, and it was a desp'rate hot day; and then the weather took a sudden turn, and there came up a rain just as we got ready to come home, and we all got drenched and chilled, and then the rain cum down on us all night. Gen'ally we manages to get our beds in some place where it won't drop down much, but that night it seemed like it made no difference, one place was as good as another, and it did seem as though mornin' would never come; and then we lay wet and chilly all night, and we all got sick, and I has never seed a well day since, and I never shall agin."

In reply to my inquiries, she said her "mon arned eight shilling a week in summer, and in winter five or six when he get work, and sometimes he get no work."

And how do you manage to live upon so small a sum, and what do you live upon? said I. "We gets nothin' but bread," said she, "and sometimes p'raters, and then some-

times when he get no work, and we not wants to go to workhouse, we gets nothin' all day and all night, and it seem like we starve; and then we haves the chil'ren cryin' for bread, and nothin' to give 'em, and can't get nothin'."

But did you never see better times? "Yes," she said, "them was good times, when we could get a mou'ful of mait of a Sunday, and a little drop of tea; but we not gets it now, and it is so hard."

Here she was interrupted by a fit of coughing, which seemed to have taken deep hold upon her vitals. I threw her a trifle, so small that I was fairly ashamed of it, but it broke up the deep fountain of her soul, the tears flowed freely, her utterance choked, and I heard nothing but sobs as I left the house.

Proceeding to the next hovel, and the next and the next, I went the rounds, and although there were some better, there were others even worse, and there was not one among them all which presented the aspect of comfort.

In the route I passed the snug farm-house of the tenant farmer, surrounded with indications of comfortable and even of luxurious living. I also passed the stately mansion of the landlord, with a beautiful park, ornamented with lawns, and shrubbery, and gravel-walks, terraces and fountains. But that death-cough was still sounding in my ears, and I sickened at the sight. This, thought I, is the price of the degradation, the privation and suffering, the tears and anguish and wasting away of life I have witnessed—else had it been a lovely scene; and I turned sadly away.

Taking up a London magazine at the hotel, on my return to town, my attention was attracted to an article on this very subject of the privation and suffering of the laboring poor. The writer, after assuring the reader that he has no desire to pull down the palace, makes an earnest appeal to its lordly occupant in behalf of the tenant of the mud hovel, and calls on him to see to it, as a matter of self-interest, that the foundations on which he himself stands are thus made strong. Mistaken man! The landlord thanks you not. How can his foundations be stronger than they are? Know ye not that it is only mind in ignorance, mind without self-respect, and mind bereft of all the higher attributes of humanity, which can possibly lie still as the foundation of such a system? Light up that inert mass with intelligence, infuse into it the elements of self-respect, give it a taste of the decencies of life, and open up to it facilities to rise, and, I apprehend, you would soon see a heaving and tossing of these low-lying foundations, and a reeling to and fro of the entire fabric of British caste, and of the government itself.

And what interest has the landlord in the comfort, health, or life of the laborer? The horse, the ox, and the hog even, are objects of interest to their owners, and they cannot be neglected with impunity. There comes up an appeal from these brutes which is irresistible! But the men, on whose earnings the landlord revels, can touch no such tender chord in his heart; it is enough for him to know that, if they die of destitution, there are enough others to take their places and labor for the same pittance.

Does he ever interest himself to know whether their habitations are comfortable or otherwise? Does he ever direct his steps to their lowly abodes to inquire into their condition and wants? Does he ever send any thing from the leavings of his loaded tables to relieve them? Does he ever know when they are sick and suffering for the necessaries of life? And do their funeral obsequies even draw from him a sigh, or interrupt for a moment the flow of his enjoyments? Never. To stoop to such things would be letting down his dignity as a landlord. There is the workhouse; let them be taken to that.

I will here remark, that I found no such landlords in France. There the humble dependant is an object of care and sympathy; and when sickness and destitution overtake him, his landlord, or his landlord's wife, is often at his bedside with cheering words and helping hand, and from their full stores his wants are supplied. That savors of humanity.

This was in Somersetshire. My next excursion was in Wiltshire. In this case, as in the other, as I approached the hovels, the same rank odor came steaming upon me, forcing me to hold my breath. The hovel I was approaching was a crumbling ruin without; and, stepping within, I wondered if it was the habitation of man. But there were the inmates, and there could be no mistake; and they too seemed to be equally struck with wonder. What earthly reason could have brought you here? was the silent language of their vacant stare. And the first chill upon my heart came of the conviction that they felt themselves so far

beneath me as scarcely to recognize me as a brother-man—shrinking away, and returning none but the shortest answers to my inquiries.

And how do you manage to live in such a place as this? said I. "We manages somehow," said the woman, gruffly. But I should suppose you would get tired of such a world as this, said I, and give up trying to live. "It's mighty little we gets, to be sure," said she. And do you ever have to go hungry? quoth I. "Lor bless me!" was her emphatic reply. And do you ever suffer with cold and wet? "You sees for yourself," she replied.

And I did see. The water stood in puddles upon the clay floor, which was lower than the ground without; so that, in wet weather, water, saturated with filth, would run in. The walls were crumbling within, as well as without; and, standing upon the ladder, and touching my umbrella to the thatched roof, down came a whole peck of it in powder, filled with vermin, while the end wall was parted from the roof, and leaned outwards, threatening to fall, and exposing the interior to the weather. As in the other case the small window-hole was plugged with rags, and light straggled in only through the crevices. I looked for another room, but found none; overhead was a sort of floor, extending over perhaps three-quarters of the area below; and this was the family sleeping-apartment. Again, standing upon the ladder, I looked into it, and what a sight, truly! In each of the two corners, lay what seemed a pile of rags, but they were the two beds in which slept parents and seven children, wedged in, I suppose, like pigs.

As I was about to step down, a ragged little urchin came in with some billets of wood. I asked him where he got them—he made no reply, but appeared terribly frightened, for he had doubtless stolen them from the copse of the manor, and had a lurking suspicion, that I might be the landlord's attorney. I asked the mother if she could buy wood on seven shillings a week; to which she replied moodily, "It's mighty little wood we gets."

She kindles a fire, hangs on the little kettle, with some water in it, takes what seems some dough, breaks off pieces, flattens them with her hands, wraps them around some pieces of turnip, and "*souses*" them in, I in the mean time prolonging my visit to see the sight.

And now the table is set, and mother and children gather around the dish of turnip dumplings, as their sole repast, seated on stools and benches, the former having about three-quarters of a plate, and a knife worn well-nigh to the back, while the latter had only a small fragment of a plate each, and were armed with one-tined forks, broken spoons, &c. But the dumplings soon disappeared, being devoured with great greediness, and with frequent ejaculations from the children, "How good these is!"—"good! good!" &c.

As I was about to take my departure, I met a laboring man in his smock-frock, whom I detained a moment with my questions. I told him it was reported and generally believed, that the wages of laborers were so small, that they often had to pick up their living where they could find it, to save themselves from starvation. To which he replied,

"We does, and let 'em carry us to jail if they likes, we lives better there than to hum."

The correspondent of the London Morning Chronicle, who had traversed the rural districts, and looked thoroughly into these matters, more than confirms all I have here said.

He speaks of having met with laborers who confessed to him, that they had to steal or starve; and one remarked to him, that he didn't care, for he "would as soon be in jail as out." He also speaks of a landlord, who, being asked how the laborers could possily live on the pittance they received, replied sternly, *They steal.* It probably never occurred to him, that he was as guilty in robbing the laborer, as the laborer in robbing him.

From the same authority I derive the following facts. The expense of boarding a single prisoner in the Dorsetshire jail, is 27*l.* 9*s.* 9*d.* annually, and at the same time the entire earnings of the agricultural laborer do not exceed 20*l.* annually. That is, the man who tries to live by honest labor, must support himself and wife, and five, six, or eight children, on three-fourths of what it costs to support a single criminal.

At the Liskeard workhouse, the expense of supporting each inmate is about four shillings a week. At that rate, the expense of supporting a laborer's family of ten persons, would be 32*s.* a week; but he only gets a fourth part of it in wages.

In a parish in Cambridgeshire, a wealthy farmer actually took three families (numbering thirty in all) home from the work-house, and employed the men at eight shillings a

week, because in so doing it would cost him less than half what his own share of the expense of keeping them there amounted to, and only one-fourth of the entire workhouse charge on their account.

Is it not plain, then, that this is a system of mutual robbery—that the landlord (the tenant being but a tool in his hands) robs the laborer of the just reward of his toil, and that the laborer in turn robs him in self-defence, and by way of reprisal? Can any thing be more demoralizing both to the oppressor and his victim?

And look at the poor famished being in contrast with his landlord—the one a mere shadow of a man, a forlorn and pitiable object, and the other full-faced, stout, and robust. Of the hundreds, and, I may say, thousands of agricultural laborers I have met with, I do not remember to have seen one who was not a mere skeleton of a man, presenting the gaunt aspect of want, without the slightest inclination to corpulency, the whole man, physical, intellectual, and moral, being apparently in a state of collapse. On the other hand, it is remarkable to meet with a well-fed Englishman, who has not a full and florid countenance, and a vigorous frame, often corpulent.

Is it wonderful, then, that this famished wretch should be a thief, schooled to it as he is by the robbery practised upon himself, and goaded to it by the pinchings of hunger? But though that be his name, and though, to expiate his offence, he be sent to Botany Bay, he has cleaner hands, and a lighter load of guilt on his soul, than the landlord who stays behind to riot upon the fruit of his earnings.

Do you say, that these things are regulated upon the principle of supply and demand, and that labor is cheap because the supply exceeds the demand? And to what does such a plea amount but to this, that landlords and tenants have taken the earnings of the poor laboring man, reduced him to privation, rags, and suffering, to starvation and death—because he was in their power?

In Berkshire, a little excursion over hill and dale introduced me into new scenes of rural life, and brought me acquainted with some new phases in the forbidding aspects of want. It was in a rural village (lovely name!) which, a little way off, seemed a place where comfort might have dwelt. But as I approached, all its enchantments fled away, just as they had always done in approaching an Arab village in the East, and, so far, a rural village in England.

In approaching it, I had to encounter the same reeking accumulations in front, and the same stench, and there was the same dilapidation before me. Upon entering one of the hovels, the first object which arrested my attention was an old man with white locks, bending under the weight of years, and sitting upon a stool. After some preliminaries, I asked him his age, to which he replied with a shake of his head. I said to him that he must have seen a great deal of trouble in his day. "Yes," said he, "I've seed trouble enough, but it'll soon be over with me now. I've been in the king's service, and was in the hottest of the fight at Waterloo, under Wellington, and I've sarved master here I don't know how long, and here I am, a poor old body. I gets somethin' from the parish, or I don't know what I should do. I was in

the workhouse last winter, but I cum out this spring, it was so hard."

But was you not comfortably provided for there? "Q yes," said he, "but it isn't like hum, you know, where I's born, and my old father afore me. There's no place like here; I wouldn't give it up for the queen's palace, that I wouldn't. I suffers sometimes, but it's not like bein' away there—human natur can't bear it, it goes agin one so."

"And you'd be 'nuff better off in the workhouse," growled out a sour-looking object in female attire, as she sat botching an old smock frock, whom I took to be his daughter-in-law. "I's but a little while to live," replied the old man, "and I wants to live here while I does live;" drawing a deep sigh as he paused. "And we not wants you here," replied the shrew, "and the sooner you gets off the better."

A slight groan betrayed his agony, as he sat in silent reverie, apparently absorbed in his own bitter reflections. He clenched his staff with a firmer grip, and the big tear rolled from its fountain; his lips began to move, and as I listened to catch his murmuring accents, I distinctly heard him pronounce the words, *home*, *King*, *Waterloo*, *Wellington;* and then, after a sigh which seemed like the giving up of the ghost, "It's all cum to this at last."

I asked him what part he took in that great battle-scene which covered his country with glory, and made his general more than a prince? That aroused him. "It was drea'ful," he said, "to stand and have 'em shot down on both sides, and lyin' a top of one 'nother; but we beat them French at last; *etarnal glory to old England*," his eye

brightening, and his countenance lighting up, as he said it.

Cruel, cruel is the fate of that old man; and yet it is the common fate of all of his class, in old age. Never do they see the time when all their earnings are not required to meet present necessities, and how can they make provision for the evening of their days? Their children have families, and cannot support them if they would, and often they would not, if they could, so utterly has every trace of humanity been obliterated by their oppressions. The explorer above referred to, speaks of having found in a single workhouse a dozen old men, the average of whose ages was over eighty years, some of them being reduced to a state of utter helplessness, and some to imbecility and idiocy; and all of whom had dragged out a life of faithful service, for a bare subsistence, only to be shoved off to die in the workhouse, when they could no longer perform their daily task.

Let us pause for a moment over this blackheartedness of landlordism. It is not enough, that it casts a blight upon its humble dependents, withering down all their hopes; not enough, that it rises only as they sink; swells into consequence only as they dwindle into nothingness; faring sumptuously only upon their sufferings, and raising louder the voice of mirth in its banqueting-halls, only as the cry of distress echoes more and more dismally through their humble abodes.

All this is not enough; that last and only solace, the privilege of dying in the hut where he was born, and around which all his associations cling as with the grasp of death, is

denied to its victim, and he is rudely uprooted in old age, torn violently away, and transplanted to a locality where he can only droop in sadness and sorrow. O, is it not a bitter cup, held to his lips by cruel hands?

There is a sacredness about the feelings of age that should be respected, yea, *venerated.* That old man of toil, what a venerable object! His gray hairs are a crown, that should strike us with awe; and ignorant though he be, and humble his position, the man who would wantonly trifle with his feelings shows himself a brute, unworthy the confidence, and deserving the execration of mankind.

And such is the fate of the men to whom England owes all the greatness and glory of which she can boast; of the men who have worn their lives away in her fields, in her mines, in her manufactories, in her workshops, upon the decks of her vessels, and upon her battle-fields. And who reaps the reward? While the victor chief of Waterloo was idolized as a demi-god, and millions of treasure lavished upon him, what became of the brave men who encountered the danger, and won the day? A part of them rotted on the field, and their bones were transported to England for manure; and of those who survived, thousands, if not tens of thousands, within three short months were crowding the poorhouses of England to suffocation. Had the five million pounds lavished upon their leader been distributed among them, it would have given the snug sum of five hundred dollars to each man, and sent joy and gladness through thousands of the habitations of want. But the cause of *good order* here would have been outraged by any such regard to justice and humanity.

CHAPTER V.

THE FOREGOING STATEMENTS CONFIRMED BY ENGLISH TESTIMONY—THE QUESTION OF CAPACITY CONSIDERED.

I AM glad of the opportunity to shift still further the responsibility of these matters from myself to the able correspondent of the London Morning Chronicle, to whose searching investigations into the condition of the rural population of the kingdom I have before alluded. After having extended his researches through the whole southern half of England, he says of the agricultural laborer in the general, "Education has advanced him but little beyond what he was in the days of William the Conqueror. As he was in generations gone by, so he is now, a moral enigma, a physical scandal, an intellectual cataleptic."

"As a class," he says, "they are moody, sullen, and morose," that "they are mere human machines, working only with their hands, and not at all with their minds;" that "few of them can read, and fewer write," and that "none can do more than write their names awkwardly," that "no one can see them without being painfully struck with the evidences of their intellectual darkness," that "there is neither speculation in the eye, nor any other than the expression of

the mere animal in their countenances," that "they are entirely wanting in the independent bearing of the man, are awkward in their gait, and dress in a garb which belongs to another century than this," that "they are timid and shrinking, and seem to wonder when you question them," that "they are suspicious when you question them, manifestly oppressed by your presence, and relieved when you leave them," that "they know no amusement beyond the indulgence of sense," and that "recreation and sensuality are identified in their minds as one and the same thing," that "such a thing as female virtue is scarcely known among them," that, "in most cases, all sense of right and wrong, in both sexes, seems to be obliterated from the mind," that "self-respect gives place to recklessness, vice gaining the mastery," that "their mud hovels are old, damp, dark, and crumbling, having a dangerous and tumble-down look about them," that "they swarm with inmates beyond their capacity, and often expose them to the inclemency of the weather," that "the diet of the laborer is far below his wants, consisting of bread only, for the most part, sometimes potatoes, and sometimes a little meat, or tea on Sunday," that "he is often destitute, and is reduced as low as is compatible with mere existence."

Say not, then, that I have overdrawn the picture. The most extravagant dashes of romance could scarcely surpass the reality. Take the above portraiture, drawn by their own hands—a portraiture, not of isolated individuals, but of *a whole class*, and where, in all the extravagancies of romance, will you find any thing to surpass it, taking the lowest class of our own countrymen as the standard of reality?

Gladly would I be spared the task, and give you only bright and glowing tints instead, overlooking the great exigencies of humanity, if I dared. But though such a brutalization of our common humanity be essential to the stability of the British constitution, I could not say less. And I can scarcely conceal the fond wish of my heart, that there may be an upheaval in that low-lying mass, be the consequences what they may.

One prominent feature in the above portraiture, is the almost utter obliteration of all traces of humanity in these victims of oppression. But that does not lessen their value to their landlords. Hear them. At the great cattle show at Windsor, Lord A. undertook the ridiculous task of drinking the health of the agricultural laborers, and his windy speech upon the occasion was reported in the newspapers. "The laborer," he said, "was called ignorant, because he could not talk; but that was the wrong test to try him by; it was the test to try a book man by, but not a laborer. A laborer was to be tested by his deeds, but not his words. Go into the fields," said he, "and see if the laborer is uneducated. Can that man be said to be uneducated who can turn a furrow as straight as you can draw a line, and scatter seed so evenly over the ground that every part of the field receives its due proportion?"

This silly flourish was listened to as a most profound and masterly vindication of the lordship system; although the simple announcement, that we have such things in America as "learned pigs," would have turned the whole thing into ridicule, and exposed its author to contempt, in the eyes of every sensible man.

But it was enough for him, that the English laborer was not sunk so low as to be incapable of learning his task. That is all nobility asks of him, or wants of him, and all it will have.

And here I must say, that never, in all my travels, whether among the savage tribes of America, or the semi-barbarous nations of Eastern Africa, Western Asia, and Eastern Europe, nowhere have I met with a tribe, or a peasantry, so utterly devoid of all the elements of *character* as is the peasantry of England; no, not even in Egypt, that "basest of kingdoms." Not that I have not been among worse people, but that I have found none in whom the *substratum of character* seemed to be so utterly wanting, and the whole man so shrivelled into nothingness.

And yet, this just suits the nobility of England; for the poor, degraded creature, can still learn his task, and perform the part *suited to his condition in life.* And what is wanting in him, is supposed to be vastly more than made up in the immense consequence of the superiors he serves, although (speaking softly), it might readily be shown, that they have nothing to spare from their own stock of merit to supply the deficiencies of others.

And then the heartless opressor will turn coolly upon his heel, and tell you, "that it is of no use to try to do any thing for them, that they are incapable of being made any thing of, and that they will be but brutes pay them what you will, and do what you will for them;" thus proclaiming his own brutality in trampling them down, until they have sunk below recovery. But there are some hopeful indications, after all, peering up from that low-lying stratum of humanity.

The superintendent of the workhouse at W., an intelligent Scotchman, remarked to me, that there was always a smothered sense of wrong in these people, and accompanying it, a low brute cunning, a sort of "I'll cheat you if I can" disposition; characteristics which are common to the oppressed of all nations, and which show, in a low degree, that humanity is not extinct, though prostrate. It is humanity vindicating herself against robbery, with the only means at her disposal, and in her ignorance not knowing any better, or in her necessity not caring. Take an instance of their ignorance, related to me by this same superintendent, and tell me if these characteristics should not be regarded as hopeful indications. Being in company with a number of men in 1844, he asked them if any of them could tell him how old they were. None of them could tell. He then said to one of them, "I think you was born about the year 1840," to which he replied, "Well, I thinks that was just about the time," making himself four years old. Shrouded in intellectual darkness like this, and a moral darkness which well-nigh obliterates all distinction between right and wrong, how very little is to be expected of them!

Another indication is, that when goaded to desperation this smothered sense of wrong bursts forth, and is seen blazing in the hay-ricks, the barns and outhouses of their employers. Nineteen of these fires occurred recently within a space of fifteen miles square. As little as possible is said of them, and they seldom get into the papers, lest the contagion should spread, and the whole country be lighted in a blaze.

Another still, and a proof too, is that when one of them chances to get out from under these paralyzing influences, he often shows a decided capacity for improvement. I am told, that sometimes, though not often, they stray away into the large towns, where, coming in contact with the busy multitude, they get jostled out of their stagnation, wake up from their torpor, and often rise to respectability.

And sometimes those in the neighborhood of the coast are seduced away to join the smuggling and buccaneering bands which infest it; and here too they often show great proficiency. I heard of one who became master of a ship engaged in the smuggling trade, and who attained to great celebrity for his extraordinary feats as a smuggler and buccaneer; and of another who became the terror of the whole country, but who, after being sent to Botany Bay, and serving out his time, rose to wealth and respectability, and became a high dignitary in the colony. In another place, I have given the proof, that convicts sent to those ends of the earth, after being liberated, often rise to competence, comfort, and respectability. I have also spoken of the new life which is infused into these people upon entering the army.

But I adduce as a still further proof, that the veteran explorer above quoted speaks of having found one parish where the laborers talked openly and fearlessly of their wrongs, and manifested the bitterest hate towards both landlords and tenants, boldly avowing Socialistic principles, declaring, that they had "a right to live, and live comfortably, as well as the rest of them;" and that "land should never be held as property, but in trust for the general use"—an

extravagance to which the masses in these old countries are naturally prone, if they get their eyes open, and their aspirations raised at all. So great are the obstacles to their upward progress, that no other way appears feasible to them; and hence Socialism, when transplanted to our country, where these obstacles do not exist, dies down at once, for want of aliment to feed on.

And nothing exhibits the institutions of these old countries in a more odious, or ours in a more glorious light, than this fact, that under the former Socialism takes root, as in a hot-bed, while, under the latter, it will scarcely germinate at all, so entirely open to all classes in our country is the highway to competence and comfort, to wealth and respectability.

But I adduced this instance as an indication that there are susceptibilities in this inert, underlying mass, which only need the play of genial influences upon them, to wake into activity energies of which the oppressor never dreamed.

CHAPTER VI.

THE RECURRING QUESTION, "CAN NOTHING BE MADE OF THEM?" SOLVED BY FACTS.

"CATCH 'em at it," said an Englishman to me, as I stood gazing upon Prince Albert's Model Cottages for the Poor. He had inquired of me what they were for, and, upon my informing him, he replied tartly, "Catch 'em at it," and added, "The landlords can build kennels for their dogs, but their laborers are not so highly favored!"

By the way, Prince Albert is a good fellow, and is constantly devising ways and means to improve the condition of the laboring classes—quite too democratic to suit English aristocrats. But what has struck me with surprise is, that nobody, not even Prince Albert, seems ever to have entertained the thought of such a change as to bring it within the competency of the laboring poor to build their own cottages. The most that has ever been contemplated seems to have been to alleviate their sufferings, and make them comfortable in their destitution. The idea of their rising to respectability, and possessing property of their own, seems never to have been entertained.

There is a society in existence, of which Prince Albert is president, the object of which is to provide and offer pre-

miums on improvements among agricultural laborers, and—will it be believed—the highest stage of improvement specified for which premiums are to be awarded is, "a clean cottage," and the lowest for *keeping themselves out of the poor-house!* But so debased are the poor creatures, that even these rewards are lost upon them; and the directors, in their report, lament the fact, that these inducements have little or no effect upon them.

And how often have parliamentary committees sat upon the grave questions involved in their suffering condition; and when did they ever go further than to recommend some temporary expedient for giving them employment, except to make provision for them in the work-house? Aye, they have gone further, and appropriations in abundance have been granted to build prisons, and erect gallowses for them, and to transport them as nuisances to the other side of the globe; but *nothing* to make them good and useful citizens, and thus to save them from such a fate, except the pittance donated through a private society.

"And it's of no use," said an individual to me the other day, "to try to make any thing of them." And that seems to be the general sentiment, and this general sentiment is an incubus upon them to weigh them down—an extinguisher to quench every noble aspiration. Being regarded as of *ignoble descent*, and worthy only of the place which they occupy, how *can* they feel *themselves* to be any thing? And feeling themselves to be nothing, and that, do what they will, they must still be nothing, what *more* than nothing can be expected of them?

I have already spoken of the effect of getting them out from under this paralyzing influence into the large towns. But I have some facts to show, that the noble sympathies even of Prince Albert were directed entirely in a wrong channel, or, at best, did not go to the source of the evil; and that they may be made something of, even under all the disadvantages of their position, with the right kind of treatment.

Mr. R. of S., well known on our side the Atlantic, and one of the best informed men I have found in the kingdom, said to me, that he had redeemed the parish in which he lives from pauperism, to a great extent, by raising the wages of the men in his employ *one shilling a week* above the common standard, and, by his example, inducing the farmers around him to do the same. By this means, he said, pauperism had been almost entirely banished from the parish. And if such an effect was produced by so small an advance of their wages, what might not be expected from bestowing upon them the full reward of their toil?

But Mr. R. related another circumstance, which is still more to the point. He said, that sometimes they were prevailed upon to enter the army; and that when they got their nice uniforms on they were transformed into a new order of beings, and seemed to feel and act as though they had been born into a new world. And when one of them came home on a furlough to visit his friends, he came back a new man. Having acquired the independent bearing of a man, he moved about with his head up, and with the careless ease of a man who felt himself to be something.

"But," he said, "when he was finally discharged and he had to exchange his fine uniform for the 'smock frock,' and resume the labors of the field, he became the same thing he was before—sank down to the same low level, put on the same doleful looks, and manifested the same *incapacity* for improvement."

Bad as their condition and character are now, however, it seems to be conceded that quite a perceptible improvement has taken place, in consequence of the repeal of the corn laws, which has placed the cheap loaf within their reach. A member of the House of Commons (Mr. Labouchiere) remarked, in a speech, that "there had been a great improvement in their physical condition, outward appearance, moral habits, and cleanliness, traceable directly to the cheapening of provisions—as all in contact with laborers knew."

A writer in the Edinburgh Review says he has been told by medical men, that the diseases of the laboring classes are less malignant and more curable since the cheapening of provisions, and quotes the remark of a popular hospital surgeon, that "they are more like *red-blooded animals* than they used to be."

Now, that certainly looks like a capacity for improvement. And if so partial a relief from their oppressions, and so partial a supply of their wants, work such effects, what would be too much to hope from a relief from all their oppressions, and a supply of all their wants?

And now that my hand is in, I will adduce an instance which will show their capacity for improvement in a still

more striking light, and which will brand with blackest infamy the oppressions which weigh them down in the land of their nativity.

When I was in Syria, I met with an English gentleman from Australia, that far-distant country to which these poor creatures are transported, by tens of thousands, for crime—crime to which they are driven by the necessities of their condition. His father is one of the great wool-growers in that country, from whose flocks the English market is supplied with fine wool. The flocks and herds there, he said, were almost uniformly under the charge of liberated convicts, as keepers; and, in point of character, industry, and thrift, they were superior to those who came out from England, of their own free will, to seek their fortunes; and they could always get employment as shepherds and stockmen, in preference to them. He said they generally saved their earnings, accumulated property rapidly, and rose to respectable positions in society. In their own native country, they were deprived of all motive to try to be any thing, abandoned themselves to crime, were ejected as unfit for human society, and cast, as nuisances, upon a far-distant shore.

And *there*, after having suffered the full penalty for their offences, we find them, under the quickening influence of hope, rising from their degradation, and showing a capacity for improvement of which they had not been thought to be capable in their own native land.

And what a tale is it to tell of a government, that the penalty for crime it inflicts, is the open door of escape from its oppressions, and the forerunner of prosperity and thrift!

But how can their condition be improved—do you ask—in their own native country? Far more easily than it can be done by expatriation for crime. That is certainly a hard way of rising; it is passing through scenes of living death, for which no subsequent prosperity can compensate.

But how can they rise to competence and comfort in their own country, constituting as they do, in their present condition, a component part of the existing order of things? In reply I would say, *do them justice.* They have been robbed of their earnings; and this it is that has kept them degraded, and driven them to crime. Let oppression loose its hold, and relinquish to them the just reward of their toil, and you would see them coming out of their torpid state, "shedding their coats," and putting on new and higher forms of existence, quite as readily, to say the least, as in a convict land.

CHAPTER VII.

REVOLTING FACTS IN REFERENCE TO THE CORRUPTION OF MORALS IN THE RURAL DISTRICTS, AS COMPARED WITH CITIES.

And here stands out a great anomaly, and one which is full of instruction. Of the fact that vice and crime find congenial abodes in the rural districts of the kingdom, evidence has already been given.

I can conceive it possible that owing to greater facilities and temptations, the outbreakings of crime may be more frequent and numerous at times in the cities and large towns than in the rural districts, but I am fully satisfied that the latter are even more thoroughly steeped in moral pollution than the former.

And I find myself sustained in this conclusion by one of their most authoritative writers. Porter, in his "Progress of the Nation" (vol. iii. p. 196), makes it appear that for thirty-six years, ending with 1841, the increase of crime was thirty-seven per cent. greater in the *agricultural* than in the *manufacturing* districts, and he drew the material for his calculation from the statistics of outbreaking crime.

For this I was prepared from what I had seen, but the

inference drawn from these facts by that profound author, awakened my surprise; he could only reason, however, from the data before him. "We see nothing," says he, "in these facts to support the assertion so often hazarded, that vice and crime are fostered by bringing men together in large masses, while innocence is preserved by rural pursuits."

How much the rather should he have said, "We see in these facts the deplorable effects of our social and political system, which has thus converted the rural districts, those natural abodes of innocence, into hotbeds of vice, and made them receptacles of moral as well as natural filth, even to a greater degree than those natural sinks of pollution, the large cities."

And what a pleasing reverse to all this does our country present, where the offences which swell the criminal calendar, are confined almost entirely to the four million inhabitants of our large cities and towns, and among these, confined to a very great extent to those who have found their way from these old countries to our shores, while near twenty millions of our people are quietly engaged in the peaceful pursuits of agriculture, with "none to molest or make them afraid!"

If we were asked to point out the class of men in our country more depraved than any other, where should we turn our eyes more naturally than to the huts which line the borders of our fishing grounds? So far as the influence of this class might avail with our rural population, would it not be for evil, and only evil?

But here, it seems, the case is reversed, and the rural pop-

ulation corrupt the fishermen. Their fishermen often become buccaneers, prowling about the coasts, raising false signals to decoy vessels upon the rocks, and boarding those stranded in a gale, musket and cutlass in hand, cut to pieces, or compel all on board to walk the plank, and plunder and despoil the ship. There are many points on the coasts of this island, where there is no hope of life to the crew of a stranded vessel, whom the elements may have spared.

The faithful chronicler of the statistics of his country's shame, to whom I have referred, tells us, that the fishermen upon the coast become corrupted by being brought in contact with the rural population. As an instance, he says, that in Cornwall, a rural village was broken up, from dilapidation and other causes, and that the inhabitants were forced to take refuge in the fishing village of Polperro, a few miles distant, and that, as a consequence, the morals of the place suffered a woful decline. What then must be the character of the rural population?

But now that the subject is up, I will relate one of many instances which have come within the range of my own observation.

I was on a visit to one of the great landlords of the kingdom, and a leading member of parliament; and my credentials being satisfactory, I was received with marked civility, and treated with attention. Never had I met with any thing before, which came so fully up to my *beau ideal* of "the old English gentleman," or seen so perfect an embodiment of hospitality and good cheer. Around his venerable mansion was spread out five thousand acres of as fine land as I ever

saw, a small portion of which (a hundred or two acres) he cultivated for his own amusement, the rest being rented.

When the time I had fixed for leaving arrived, I found a carriage waiting at the door to convey me to the railroad station (three miles distant), from which I had walked when I came in. There was ample time to reach it in season for the expected train without hurrying, but the driver put on all speed, alleging as a reason, that it was getting late (being about sundown), and he had got to hurry back to make arrangements for a guard to watch his master's flock that night, as the laborers stole his sheep; adding, that they had sent some of them to Botany Bay already, and were in a fair way to send more.

This excited no surprise in my mind, for if nothing had transpired before to enlighten me, I had seen enough in connection with this visit to explain it all.

In proceeding on foot from the station to the mansion of this worthy landlord, I passed through a rural village, and took occasion to look into some of the hovels; and *there* I saw enough to furnish a key to all these mysteries. *There* was pining want sitting upon a stool, and *there* the cry for bread was heard from mouths which there was no bread to satisfy.

As I passed along, with all nature decked in her most charming attire, on the right and on the left, my attention was attracted to some laborers who were at work by the road-side. Approaching one of them, I attempted to draw him into conversation, and succeeded at last in so far overcoming his reluctance, as to get answers to my inquiries, and I lingered to listen to the simple tale I had provoked.

I told him I was an American, and asked him if he ever saw one before. "Did you ax me if I ever seed one afore?" he replied. Yes, said I. "No," he rejoined, "but I've hearn about 'em, and I knowed some poor men went there and got good farms."

And why don't the rest of you go, and not stay here to starve?

"We can't; we only gets just what'll keep us, and tough work at that, and how can we get money?"

And what do you live on?

"Unbolted wheat bread."

Very good; and what else?

"Nothin'; and not enough of that. We only gets seven shillin' a week, and now master is agoin' to put us down to six. One shillin,' or one shillin' and sixpence of it we has to pay for rent, and one shillin' for coal."

But will a shilling's worth of coal keep you warm in winter?

"No, it 'll only do our cookin', and we can't cook much at that."

And how do you keep warm in winter?

"We haves to do as we can, and do without fire; we sits in the cold evenin's, and we haves but little bed-clothes, and the cold wind blows in, and we suffers with the cold all night; but it's the best we can do, and we has to bear it."

But can you not keep a cow and a pig?

"No, we gets no land to keep a cow on, and we eats up every thing about the house, and there's nothin' left for a pig."

Is it wonderful then, that tenants and landlords should be

necessitated to set sentries to guard their flocks against the depredations of their laborers, and that far distant lands are being peopled with the castaway victims of want? Is it wonderful, that through this open channel moral pollution should pour in tides over the rural districts of England?

And, if such scenes can transpire under the auspices of one of the best landlords of which England can boast, and, I may add, one of her most talented and patriotic sons, where shall we look for any thing better?

But nothing furnishes a more unerring index to the moral condition of the rural population of England, or a more painful one, than the acknowledged debasement of the female sex, of which I have already given proof.

It was a revolting spectacle to me to see, for the first time, whole troops of females at work in the fields here, toiling at the spade, the mattock, and the hoe. Driven by necessity from their household duties, they are necessitated to put off all the gentler graces of the sex, repair in droves to the fields, and toil for a few pennies a day, to save themselves from starvation.

And what an outrage upon humanity! As sacredly as the priest is consecrated to the altar, so sacredly is woman consecrated to the sphere of her domestic duties, there to shine as a light, and there to shed around the domestic hearth those sweet and precious influences, without which home loses all its attractions and all its enjoyments.

And the humbler that home, the sweeter and the more precious are the comforts it has to give; for they are the only solace of the poor laboring man, and, if deprived of this, what has he left?

O ye, who are thus desolating the poor laborer's home, by striking down woman from her place, that you may squander your thousands upon your lusts, what have you done?

If it were only the indurated hands, the sun-burnt face, the stiffened form, and the uncouth manner—if that were all—if, in addition to this, it only left the laborer's home to filth and desolation, from which he turns away in quest of ale-house enjoyments—if that were all, you might revel on over your cups. But the saddest of the tale has not been told, and cannot be. I have given you the key.*

When the rural population of a country becomes thus corrupt, how little is there to hope! And when this corruption spreads itself to a great extent, through all the working classes, where in such a sea will the ship of state cast anchor with safety?

And what a difference in the safeguards of the governments of the two countries—the one being anchored in the virtue, the intelligence, and the affections of the people, and the other held to her moorings by the strong arm of power alone—not perhaps alone—there is an idolatry of power here which goes far to strengthen its sinews; but when that power shall sink to weakness, that idolatry will sink to contempt.

* I am told that such sights have been seen in some sections of our own country, transported thither from these old countries, but I trust old countrymen will get shamed out of it, and learn better by degrees.

CHAPTER VIII.

ASTOUNDING DISCLOSURES IN REGARD TO THE EDUCATIONAL AND INTELLECTUAL CONDITION OF THE RURAL POPULATION, AND OF THE PEOPLE GENERALLY.

Says the British Almanac for 1851, of the rural population of England: "Generation after generation has vegetated on the soil from time immemorial, without receiving, for the greater part, any schóol or book education; just like the produce of the fields, which grew up, and was cut down in its season, as they were. They have almost been left as much alone as though the country had still been in a savage state. Civilization has, in fact, only been extended to them by reflection from those above them, *whose numbers in proportion to their own is one to four or five.*"

This refers to the rural population. Let us now listen to what they have to say in reference to the educational condition of the people generally, in city and country. According to returns made by the Registrar General, of the marriages which transpired in England and Wales, during the three years, '39, '40, and '41, out of 367,894 couples united in wedlock, 122,457 men, and 181,378 women, made their *marks* in subscribing the marriage register;—that is,

one third of the men, and about half of the women, embracing all classes—the high and the low—were unable to write legibly.

The distinguished writer from whom I take the above statistics (Porter), accompanies them with the remark, that there is much opposition among the higher to the education of the lower classes, on the ground that it would spoil them for laborers and servants; and he cites the case of a merchant, who gravely remarked to the superintendent of the poor-law commission, that "an agricultural laborer was very little above a brute," and that "to educate him would only have the effect to render him dissatisfied with his condition in life."

He states also, that when Lancaster commenced his system of instruction, the alarm was sounded that it would unsettle the existing order of things; and that the inquiry came up, "If this man succeeds, what shall we do for servants to black our boots and tend our horses—for they will all be getting above their business?"

At Marseilles I met with an English gentleman and lady, who were on their way to Italy to spend the winter; and as we were at the same hotel, I soon became somewhat intimate with them, and they seemed much interested in what I had to say in reply to their inquiries about my country. Among other things, I spoke of the general diffusion of education among all classes of the people, and the facilities enjoyed by the lowest in society to rise to wealth and respectability; remarking that a poor laboring man, without family, could, with prudence, save enough in three years'

time to buy him a piece of land, and set up for independence.

"And what! do you have to change your servants every three years?" he exclaimed, and added, "I could never stand such a state of things as that; when I get a good, faithful servant, I want him for life."

Those were excellent people, and I became much attached to them. Their views and feelings on this subject were those to which they were born; and they seemed altogether at a loss to know how such a state of things as I described could possibly be consistent with stability and good order.

Here, then, we have the fact, and the reason of it, all written out by themselves, and freely confessed.

I am well aware that a great deal is said of late about what is doing to repair the mischief; and, to hear them talk, one would suppose the country was getting into a pretty good way, as it regards educational facilities. They will tell you about the National schools, the British schools, the parochial schools, the endowed schools, the private schools, the Sunday schools, &c., &c.; and many of them are thus charmed into the idea that the country has something to boast of in this line.

These are high-sounding names, National, British, Parochial, &c., &c.; and to a person green enough to be deceived by names, they carry a tremendous import. What, then, are the National schools? They are simply schools established by a private society which takes the name of National, and the term British is taken by another private society. The parochial schools are nothing but workhouse schools.

That these Societies have been established, and made an onset upon the dark domain of ignorance here, is certainly to be hailed as an omen for good; but all which has yet been accomplished is small indeed in comparison with what remains to be done. According to a report recently made to the House of Commons, the entire number of children connected with all the day schools of every description in the kingdom, stands only as one to every eight and a half of the population.

The government has never yet taken a step toward the establishment of a national system of education. I have often asked the reason why, and for lack of a better, have been told in reply, that the great multiplicity of sects makes it impracticable. And yet we have more sects than they, and have no difficulty on the subject. The truth is, the government has no heart for it; that is the true secret of the matter.

They can build workhouses, and jails, and hospitals, that vie in magnificence with palaces, and I have been often asked if our country could show any thing equal to them; as though these things not only atoned the nation's guilt, and covered its shame in this matter, but were proud monuments to its glory. But to what do they all amount but this, that the poor laboring man is robbed of his earnings, and thus reduced to pauperism and crime, and that out of the avails of this robbery, a portion is appropriated to build workhouses and jails for him, and to transport him as a felon to the other side of the globe!

And then I have been pointed to the efforts of individual

and associated philanthropy, and Christian charity, as an offset to all this ignorance, pauperism, and crime. Far be it from me to disparage such efforts; but it should go far to abate our admiration, that most of what is thus given is the poor victim's own hard earnings, kept back from him of fraud, till he has sunk to pauperism and crime, and then bestowed upon him when it is too late.

And what did even the philanthropy of a Howard ever accomplish for suffering humanity, but to spread attractions around the jail, which have caused it to be coveted as a refuge from the great prison-house of labor, privation, and suffering, in which millions of "free-born Englishmen" are chained to a life of thankless toil!

How vain the attempt thus to purify the streams while this great fountain is thus pouring them forth! How can Christian philanthropy ever hope to get so much as a foothold against the overwhelming tide?

Till the people are educated and enlightened, there can be no remedy. Nor can they ever be educated and enlightened so long as they are robbed of their earnings, their self-respect, and their manhood, and doomed to destitution and want. Though the country were all covered over with school districts, and supplied with competent teachers, it would be useless in such a state of things. It is the testimony of the able investigator to whom I have before referred, that the few schools already established by the Societies I have named, are doing little or no good in the rural districts; and that children and youth are growing up as ignorant and degraded as the generation now upon the stage, most of the

children being driven to the fields at an early age, and never entering them at all; and of the few who do, rarely, he says, does one make proficiency enough to do him any good.

The very entering wedge, the first great lever to be employed in elevating the working man of England, then, must be *compensation* and *domestic comfort;* and when that comes, then will he be accessible to the benefits of education; and then, and not till then, will he rise up from his degradation.

But that would never do; it would unsettle the foundations of stability and good order, raise a commotion in the elements, and endanger the very existence of the institutions of the country, to the dismay of privilege and power.

And so they will keep on bragging of their poor-houses and jails, and of the rigorous execution of justice upon the criminals they are making out of honest men, while private charity is thus busy at work to provide a *salvo* to the conscience and a covering to the shame of the nation, without, in fact, accomplishing any thing for the working men of England, or the slightest hope of accomplishing any thing. The Good Samaritan has not yet appeared to bind up the wounds of the poor laboring man, prostrate and "lying among thieves."

And there they will let him lie; and though it cost the nation four times as much in workhouses, and jails, and transportation, as it would cost to make good and useful citizens of these ruined people, it heeds not the expenditure, for the victims themselves have to foot the bill.

To show how little a system of national education, if adopted, would accomplish for the working man, while

robbed of his earnings, we have Scotland before us, as an example. There the reformation was followed by the establishment of a system of national education, sustained by the state; a system providing for instruction, not only in the elementary branches, but in Latin and Greek; and to it the middle classes in Scotland owe their superiority to the corresponding classes in England, insomuch that every where in the latter country are to be found Scotch teachers, Scotch gardeners, Scotch superintendents of workhouses and railway stations, and throughout England they are engrossing offices of trust and responsibility.

But though this system, at the same time, extends educational facilities to all classes alike, from the highest to the lowest, and though it has done so much for those who are in a situation to enjoy the fruits of their labors, how little has it done for the poor working man! He is not as stupid as the English farm laborer, but the "little glooming light" he gets, is of little use to him. Doomed to subsist on the same starvation wages, and to be the victim of the same destitution and want, he presents a spectacle little less forlorn and distressing than that which we have been contemplating.

Whatever efforts may be made then to educate these people, no appeal can ever reach their hearts, until robbery has ceased to prey upon their earnings. But privilege will relinquish none of those extravagancies which feed upon that robbery, and it will riot on at the expense of the ruin, the sufferings, and the death-groans of humanity.

And privilege has its world-renowned universities, and

on them the eye of the government and of the country proudly rests, as the monuments of national fame.

When at Cambridge and Oxford, I took some pains to inquire into the character of these universities, and I learned, to my surprise, that they are little more than genteel places of resort, where the sons of the nobility and gentry, while away their seven years in drinking, gambling, and serving their master generally; while but few of them ever profit by the course. Being in company with a landlord in Ayrshire, I asked him the botanical name of a plant we were examining, which I could not call to mind, to which he replied, that I must not ask him, for he left all his botany at the university. And this I apprehend to be a fair specimen of the usual standard of acquirement with those who graduate at these famous institutions. But they come out with all the honors of Cambridge or Oxford upon them, and with this capital, many of them are enabled to play the charlatan with tolerable success in after life. From all I can learn, I am fully satisfied that our colleges, generally, send out a far greater proportion of thorough scholars, than these universities. The factitious consequence which has been bestowed upon them, is of a piece with that which has exalted the nobility of this kingdom to the position of demi-gods; stripped of this, the shame of their nakedness appears. They have a thorough course, and those who choose, take it, and occasionally there comes out a ripe scholar, but so strong is the current he has to stem, that he may be said, emphatically, to be a *self-made* man.

And thus enough is wasted, absolutely thrown away, I

had almost said, to sustain a system of universal education for the people.

Shame, *shame* upon England, that the mass of her people are abandoned to ignorance and brutality, as the only safeguard to the institutions of the country! Whence but from the dark abodes below, could such institutions ever have arisen?

What, I pray, is a nation's richest treasure, if it be not mind, *educated mind?* And what is that government good for, which does not covet this treasure above silver and gold; which does not bestir itself for the development of its intellectual resources, digging out, polishing, and setting these precious gems, to shine as jewels in its crown of glory?

For what is a government instituted, if it be not for the benefit of mind? Is it not mind which distinguishes man from the brute, and makes him capable of being benefited by government; and if mind lies neglected like the brute, may there not as well be no government at all? And if in addition to this neglect, the government imposes burdens which grind mind into the dust, and dwarf it into a mere burlesque of humanity, is it not a great deal worse than no government at all?

CHAPTER IX.

THE LANDLORD, AND NOT THE LABORER, BENEFITTED PRINCIPALLY BY THE ABOLITION OF SERFDOM.

At the time of the Great Exhibition of the Works of Industry of all Nations (held here last year) I noted some things which may be turned to account in these pages.

Of all the wonderful things which were there to be seen, not one attracted more attention as a curiosity, than the regimental display of the bone and sinew of England, in the form of her agricultural laborers. On one occasion, there were a thousand of them, in their smock frocks, and with little red ribbons upon their hats, marched two and two into the Crystal Palace, as though on purpose for a show.

And why should they not be considered as belonging to the "*works of industry*," as much as agricultural implements, and as fit subjects for exhibition? They are only machines. I have already given authority on that subject, and I notice, that a writer in the London Farmers' Magazine, speaks of them as "those human machines," and suggests various improvements in them. And they *are* machines; aside from the particular kind of work to which they have been drilled by long continued care, they are like a wheel out of gear, and only break and destroy at every move.

They use tools, to be sure, but very much as one mechanical power is made to operate upon another, both together constituting but the one machine in the hands of the operator. And it must be confessed, that in this species of mechanism, as in some others, England has distanced all nations.

Stepping up to one of them, I asked him if he was a farm laborer, to which he replied, "Yes; I belongs to Esq. ——, a fust rate mon he is too; he's a parliament mon, and don't you think he's a gen'lemon to pay our 'spenses to the Great Exhibition?"

At that instant, a voice bawled out in the crowd, "Esq. —— has brought these fellows here to get paraded in the newspapers, for the show he can make of them." But they did not seem to heed it any more than so many cattle, and, continuing my inquiries, I asked him if the laborers were prospering, to which he replied "No, we're *haying* now."

Addressing myself to another, I asked him if he belonged to Esq. ——, to which he replied, "No, I belongs to the Earl of R., and he's bro't us all five hundred here at his own 'spense."

Of another I inquired, if he knew any thing about America. He said he had "hearn tell of it, and he once petitioned his master to let him go there, but his petition was refused;" meaning, I suppose, that his master declined fitting him out; for I am sure I cannot conceive what else he could mean.

Seeing an intelligent looking Englishman standing by, I asked him how it was that these men talked of having masters, and spoke of their relations to them just as though they were slaves.

"Why," said he, "they belong to the soil, as much as the serfs of Russia, and although not named in the bond, they are actually transferred with it from master to master."

Do you wonder how this can be? I will tell you how; but first go with me a little way back toward the dark ages, and let us see what changes serfdom has undergone in this island.

No more than three centuries ago, the forefathers of these people were serfs, which is but another name for slaves. They were bought and sold, not only *with* the soil, but *without* the soil (See Hallam, vol. ii. p. 90), and were subject to the lash. Between the landlord and the serfs stood the vassal, who sustained much the same relation to each as the tenant farmer does now, that is, the landlord let out the land and serfs to the vassal, as he does now the land to the tenant farmer, the laborers (though not actually stipulated for) continuing to sustain much the same relation to both as the serfs did before. The *appearance*, the *legal forms* of serfdom have been abolished—and abolished, I am bold to say, the better to enjoy the reality.

The old system bound the landlord up to rigors which entailed a life of trouble upon him. It bound him to furnish a certain number of men with supplies to sustain them forty days in each year, to be mown down in battle in the military expeditions of the sovereign. After a while, a substitute was found for this in taxation, which became very oppressive. And then, if the landlord refused compliance, or his loyalty were suspected in the least, the royal vengeance was sure to be visited upon him; and a very common method of

inflicting it, was to stir up the spirit of revolt among his dependants, by which means, he was always liable to be butchered in cold blood.

And this very game was played by the Emperor of Austria with the landlords of Austrian-Poland, in 1848, where the feudal system remains in full force to this day. Suspecting their loyalty, and jealous of their power, he made a demand upon them for subsidies to be drawn from their peasantry, of a most oppressive character. At the same time, he sent agents among the latter, to sympathize with them, listen to their complaints, and stir them up to resistance, and, as a consequence, they rose upon the landlords, and butchered them by thousands. There are only the two orders there, however, landlords and serfs, there being no vassals between them.

These landlords had prayed for deliverance from the system, but the emperor sternly refused to allow them to emancipate their serfs, holding them to all the responsibilities, rigors, and perils of the system, as the surest means of keeping them under his control. In Hungary, the landlords, about the same time, took the matter into their own hands, and not only emancipated their serfs, but consented to divide their lands with them, as I learned when there.

What a God-send to the landlords of England, then, was deliverance from a system which imposed such burdens, responsibilities and horrors, and which besides subjected them to the burden of supporting their own poor; and then, they absolutely get the labor of "the free-born Englishman" now

for less than it would cost them to support him as a slave, as I have already shown.

And what have the peasantry of England gained by the change? We often see paraded before the public a scale of wages, showing an increase, from century to century, in the compensation allowed them, and forthwith the conclusion is deduced, that they have been gradually improving in the comforts of life. But I have already given the most undisputable proof, that they are subjected to the utmost privation and suffering upon the wages they now receive. Of course wages must vary with the cost of living, and as the starvation point rises or sinks. There was a time, when that point stood at two pence a day—now it stands at one shilling a day. It has ever been the study of both landlords and tenants to ascertain exactly where it stands for the time being, and to regulate the laborer's pay accordingly. And so far from his being better off now, than formerly, we have evidence to show that the reverse is the fact. The correspondent of the London Morning Chronicle, speaking of the scenes of destitution he had witnessed among this class, expresses himself convinced, that they were much better off formerly than now, and quotes Fortescue to show, that, in his day (when they were serfs, 400 years ago), meat was their principal food.

Wherein then have the peasantry been the gainers by the change? Do you say they are not subject to the lash, and are not liable to be bought and sold?

True, they are not subject to the lash, and, as I said, the *legal forms* of sale and purchase have been abolished. But

let us see what has been gained to the poor peasant by these concessions. As an offset to the first, let us turn our eyes to the evils he now suffers as "a free-born Englishman," from which, as a serf, he was exempt.

As a serf, he was provided for in sickness and old age, and was permitted to live and die in the hut where he was born, a privilege so sacred and so dear to these poor creatures, that they would cheerfully bare their backs to the lash rather than forego it. Their local attachments seem to be strong in proportion as they are concentrated. Shut out from all that range of objects which engross the regards of those in the higher walks of life, from long habit, their very existence seems to become identified with their locality, with the stool on which they have sat, the board from which they have eaten, and the pallet where they have slept; and to tear them away and hurry them off to the workhouse, is an infliction scarcely less dreaded than death itself.

And then, there is the merciless rending of family ties at the workhouse. Parents and children, husbands and wives, are not indeed torn asunder to be sold into a distant market (nor were they as serfs), but they are torn asunder and confined to separate apartments at the workhouse. It is thus at their option, to suffer and die of destitution at their homes, or have all their family ties broken up by an entire separation, and seclusion from each other; and this is the reason why they will suffer every thing but death, before they will accept of parish relief. It is true, their social enjoyments are coarse, but they are all they know, and of course are all the world to them.

How, then, has the condition of the peasantry been improved by the abolition of serfdom? Have they been relieved from destitution? Have they risen from their degradation? Nay; are they not more liable to destitution than before, and are they not equally degraded? And in place of the lash, are not still greater cruelties inflicted upon them?

But how does it appear that they are still transferred with the soil from master to master? As "free-born Englishmen," are they not at liberty to go where they choose?

I have taken pains to inform myself on this subject, and as the result, I am fully satisfied that my informant was in the right when he said, that they are still transferred with the soil, as much as the serfs of Russia. And I have derived my information from the most reliable authority, from superintendents of workhouses, such as the intelligent Scotchman at W., of whom I have spoken, as well as from various other sources.

In the first place, there is a general understanding among the farmers of a parish, that they will not employ each other's laborers, an understanding most *religiously* observed; and, in fact, such has always been the redundance of laborers, that there has been no temptation to violate it.

Let us suppose that one of these forlorn creatures, goaded to desperation by privation and abuse, takes his little bundle in his hand, tears himself from the spot to which he has grown fast, and sets out in quest of employment. With eyes upon the ground, he moves awkwardly along, seeing nothing and hearing nothing, his thoughts all brooding upon

"WHY DID YOU LEAVE YOUR MASTER?"

See page 81.

his troubles. He passes farm-house after farm-house, without having the heart to call, for he has as little hope of finding sympathy from any human being, as the man who has escaped from a sinking wreck, only to fall into the hands of barbarians. Onward he goes, till he comes to the limit of the parish, and here he pauses, sits himself down, and buries his soul in bitter reflection. "If I pass this limit," he says, "I forfeit the privilege of parish relief, until I gain it by the required residence, or return. And then, I have no '*character*' to show from my old master, and without it they will take me for a vagrant and a thief! What shall I do—go back and submit to my fate, or go forward and run the risk? Pressed on by the horrors which rise upon him from behind, he picks up his little bundle and proceeds on his way. At length, weary and hungry, at the close of the day, he turns up at a farm gate, and, presenting himself a candidate for employment, timidly asks for work. And then comes down upon him the withering interrogatory, "*Why did you leave your master?*" And that ends the matter, for he has no "character" to show, and no reason to give which would be deemed satisfactory. Again and again he applies for work, but with the same result. The cold repulse enters like iron into his soul, and under the pinchings of want, he is nerved up to the resolution to retrace his steps, and throw himself upon the mercy of his old master, or take refuge in the workhouse.

And thus it is, that the peasantry here are transferred with the soil from master to master, as effectually as they were centuries ago; and thus it is, that they suffer even more cruel privations, than when they were serfs.

CHAPTER X.

IRELAND, ITS OPPRESSIONS, WOES, HEART-BREAKINGS, YEARNINGS, AND SUSCEPTIBILITIES.

I HAVE crossed the Irish sea, and set foot upon the land of song and of sorrow, of merriment and tears, of hope and despair, of smothered fires and burning volcanoes.

Ireland is a problem which is yet to be solved. Up to this hour she has continued in an embryo state, and yet she is an enigma. What resources, what gems she has locked up within her, none can tell. Only an occasional lightning gleam shoots across her darkness.

Never was a more beautiful country spread out beneath the canopy of heaven, or one more prolific in the means of enjoyment; and never in any people was the human heart better attuned for enjoyment. Why then should they not live comfortably and happily upon this highly-favored portion of the globe?

Their neighbors over the channel say it is because they are so *lazy*. But who ever hears of their laziness when they get thousands of miles away? In our own country, where there are hundreds of thousands of them, who ever hears of their laziness? When did they ever refuse to do our dirtiest work for pay?

This then cannot be the reason—it is but the swagger of bloated idleness itself, to cover its own shame in treading them down. The Irish may be lazy here for aught I know, but if they are, how manifest is it that it comes of the lack of motive to exertion. Pray tell me, who is not lazy when all such motive is removed? Who does not droop and languish, and become idle and vagrant, when all motive to try to be any thing is taken away?

Take this issue then, if you prefer it—why are the Irish lazy in their own beautiful country, and *there alone?* Why do their energies droop and languish under so genial a sky? Why does gaunt poverty meet you at every step? Why does anarchy utter her screams, and run riot through the land, and murder stalk forth at noonday?

These are grave questions, and should be gravely considered. And I undertake to say, that these evils are all traceable directly to the landlord system, the failure of the potato crop serving only as a temporary aggravation.

Nor am I disposed to cast the reproach that some have upon the tything branch of this system—an adjunct by the way which I by no means regard with favor. The tything system comes in for its share of the blame, as part and parcel of the landlord system, and nothing more. For instance; here is a parish with not more than half a dozen members of the established church in it, and yet a clergyman is supported by the tythes collected for the most part from those who have their own clergyman to support besides, which seems, at first view, to be shockingly oppressive upon the tillers of the soil.

But the truth is, the tythes are paid by the tillers of the soil as a part of their rent. Every cultivator of the soil pays rent to two landlords, one of which is the lord of the manor, who holds but a part of the proprietorship (the greater part to be sure), and the other is the Established Church (or the person or persons to whom her interests have been transferred), which holds the remaining portion of the proprietorship, the tythes being the rent of it, fixed by law.

The tything system then is chargeable with blame no further than as it comes in as a component part of the general landlord system. Upon this subject I have taken special pains to inform myself. It is the landlord system as a whole which sheds down such blighting influences upon the working classes, nipping in the bud every noble aspiration, and spreading desolation over the whole field of rural industry.

The peasantry here are very differently situated, for the most part, from those of England. There are tenant farmers here who employ them as laborers, as in England; but the greater part of them live upon and work pieces of land rented directly from the landlord. Their leases generally extend through several generations; and each succeeding generation of children, have subdivided among themselves the lands they inherited by means of these long leases, until an Irish farm has come to be, in most instances, a rather diminutive affair, often consisting of no more than one, two, three, five, or ten acres in extent, surrounded and cut up by huge, unsightly open ditches, and set with mud hovels. But if fringed and bordered with gold, and set with

jewels, it could not be dearer to the heart of the Irish peasant.

These people have always been put to all they could do to pay their rent; and of late years they have found it difficult to pay them at all—so difficult that they have to repair, in vast numbers, to England and Scotland, in harvest time, to raise a little money for the purpose. In both England and Scotland I have met troops of them, consisting of men, women and children, toiling the long summer day in the harvest field for so paltry a pittance as one shilling to one shilling and three pence a day to the men, and half price to the women. On one occasion, fifty of them sat by the road-side eating their dinners as I passed, which consisted only of sixteen ounces of poor bread each; and I learned from them that they were allowed nothing but oatmeal porridge for their breakfast, while they were left to provide their own suppers and lodging out of the above-named pittance. And yet I have heard their employers brand them as thieves because they made free with their turnips in the fields to satisfy their hunger.

On one occasion I was passing with a landlord over a portion of his premises, which brought us in view of some sixty or seventy of these poor Irish laborers, consisting of men and women, boys and girls, all bending to their task; and as we paused to admire the magnificent sweep they were making through the golden harvest-field, the grain falling before them to the breadth of half a quarter of a mile, he remarked to me with a jeer, "These are Irish farmers, who are working for money to pay their rent."

But what has aggravated the evils of the landlord system far more than the failure of the potato crop, has been the *non-residence* of the landlords. Almost to a man, they have forsaken the country, to lead a dashing life in England, swarming about the metropolis. Of course the entire land rent of the country has been drawn away from it, to be expended there upon their extravagances, and this has contributed to increase the general distress here.

But their enormous rents did not suffice—to meet their profligate expenditures they had to mortgage their lands, and to aggravate their distress thus entailed, just as far as the potato crop failed, their rents were not paid at all, and that brought on the crisis—a law had to be passed authorizing the sale of the incumbered estates of *the nobility and gentry of Ireland*, and they have been going off under the hammer ever since I have been in the country; and, in most instances, they have been sold for no more than was barely sufficient to pay incumbrances.

What will be the remoter consequences of the breaking up of an agricultural system whose sole dependence was upon "*one single, lazy root*," remains to be seen; but the immediate consequences have been calamitous enough to these poor people. Every where they have been ousted from homes which they and their forefathers have occupied for many generations, only to perish by thousands. Even those who have fled to the workhouses seem not to have found a refuge from death. According to a parliamentary report, eighteen hundred of them died in two workhouses alone in the course of a few months; and the Dublin News Letter

says, that "a vast majority of all who have been ejected have perished."

I believe it will be found a principle of human nature, that the heart clings to its accustomed locality, and the few objects it embraces, with a fondness of grasp about in proportion to the greatness of its remove from those refinements which we are apt to think make up the sum total of life's happiness. The wider the range of enjoyments, the more divided the affections seem to become, and the less intense.

The Irish peasant's home, though humble and lowly, and to our eye forbidding, and though his paternal domain be but a small spot, is all the world to him, and around it cluster all his earthly hopes. He dreads removal as he dreads death; as though, having vegetated there, he feared, as the effect of transplanting, that he would be certain to die down and perish.

And it is almost enough to reconcile one to wretchedness and filth, to see Pat sitting upon the manure heap which looms up directly in front of his lowly hut, calmly smoking his pipe, as he looks abroad with ineffable self-complacency over a luxuriant potato-patch; or as he sits at his frugal board, with the humble esculent before him, while the pig (the gintlemin what pays the rint), is domiciled in a recess of the same, and squeals out a craving desire for a participation in the banquet.

And I am almost prepared to say, that were it not for the sad contingencies which so often overtake him, and subject him to suffering, starvation and death, *with his ideas of comfort*, he would be a happier man than the lord, who, *with*

his ideas of comfort, looks from the balcony of his palace over his broad domain, swarming with dependents, with discontent sitting personified upon his brow; or as he sits at his loaded tables, and fairly groans that he has but a single stomach to gratify—and upon whose ear the strains of the guitar pour less grateful melody, than does the music of the stye upon that of his humble dependent.

Humble indeed is the lot of the Irish peasant, small are his wants, modest and lowly his aspirations—despised by the great ones and the little ones above him, are the objects around which his heart dances with delight, the chiefest among them all being the spot which he calls his home.

Co-existent with this attachment to his humble home, there is in him a total want of versatility of character—an utter incapacity, for the time being, to adapt himself to the necessities of change. Jostled out of the little sphere in which he is accustomed to move round and round, he becomes bewildered and lost, and knows not what to do, or which way to turn. In the present emergency, those few who can, are crowding their way to our shores, and upon those who cannot, despair is fast doing its work.

"What shall be done with Ireland?" is the standing interrogatory on the other side, especially just before the meeting of parliament, and various measures have been set on foot for "the regeneration of Ireland," but all to no purpose, and for the good and sufficient reason, that they have no applicability to the case.

At this moment, it is gravely proposed to take advantage of the breaking up the hitherto existing landlord system

here, to substitute another on the English basis of large farms, on which the Irish peasantry may be employed as laborers at stated wages, and many English and Scotch farmers have already emigrated and taken farms; the favorable terms offered by the new proprietors (on account of the supposed insecurity of life and property here) holding out great inducements, and all the English and Scotch papers are cheering them on, and raising hallelujahs for Ireland, as though the time of her redemption were drawing near.

And what is to be gained to the poor Irish by this importation of hated task-masters from over the channel? All that these devout friends of Ireland hope or expect from this measure, is that the Irish peasantry will be reduced to the condition of the English farm laborer, *such as I have described it*, that thus, as they say, the poor creatures may be saved from liability to starvation, by an occasional failure of the potato crop.

Astonishing exhibition of philanthropy! Dazzling orb of hope to rise upon benighted Ireland! *Far rather* would I be a wild Irishman among the bogs, with rags and independence, than to be such an embodiment of ignorance, stupidity, and brutality—nay, I would sooner turn up an untamed Indian in his native wilds, a Bedouin in the desert, a Hottentot, any thing, than such a shrivelled anomaly, such a deformed lump of humanity, such a reproach to christianity and civilization, such a plague spot upon the creation of God.

If any think I am dealing in hyperbole, I have only to say, *come and see.* You have no *data* on which to form an opinion upon the other side of the Atlantic, nor upon this,

unless you go out of the beaten track. *There* you see one side of the matter, in the tens of thousands of the Irish poor who are flocking to our shores, but you see not the other, for the English farm laborer has hitherto neither had the manhood and spirit to think of such a thing as crossing the sea, to escape from his oppressions, nor the means to accomplish it. What sort of an estimate is to be put upon a people who can be made to believe that a steeple, whose top has been blown off, will shoot up again upon being manured well at the root? Do you say the story must be false? Then, I ask what sort of an estimate is to be put upon a people, concerning whom such things are said, whether true or false?

With all their degradation, all their poverty and rags, and laziness and crime even, there is a vivacity and spirit, and, in one direction or another, a degree of intelligence which raise the Irish peasant many degrees above the English farm-laborer, in his mulishness, his stolidity, and his brutality.

And, as I said, their capabilities of improvement are demonstrated by what they have accomplished when set free upon our shores. The wonder is not that the Irish laborer accomplishes *no more*, and makes *no larger* figure when he comes amongst us, but that he accomplishes *so much*, and makes *so large* a figure, emerging as he does from beneath the chilly and paralyzing influence which makes him what he is here. And coming as he does, galled, chafed, bleeding and smarting, we have only to take him by the hand, speak words of kindness to him, and throw around

him the plastic influences at our command, to make a man of him—and he is capable of it, he is.

There is an openness and a warmth of temperament, a galloping flow of the spirits, and an open-armed hospitality about the Irish which I like, and which shows off in repulsive contrast, the barricaded selfishness, the measured formality, and heartless show, which too often characterize their neighbors over the way. There is no truer heart than throbs in the bosom of an Irishman, when every thing is right within him and without him, and there are no nobler specimens of humanity than have risen up, from time to time, among the Irish people.

They have been accused of *duplicity*, and, for aught I know, the charge may be founded in truth. But if it be, think you, that they are sinners above all other men? Think you, that the Irish peasant is born with a lie in his mouth, any more than the rest of mankind? I tell you *nay*, they are just what oppression makes every people under heaven. Go, hunt the world over, take the circuit of the globe, and explore it from pole to pole, and where will you find an oppressed people that are not both liars and thieves, in self-defence, and, I had almost said, by necessity? I have found quite as much duplicity and thievishness among the farm laborers of England, as among the peasantry of Ireland. I have found the same cause to produce the same effects every where, in England, Scotland, and Ireland, as well as among the Fellahs of Egypt, and other oppressed countries of the old world. Every where oppression casts a blight upon every virtue, and quickens into life the seeds of vice which lie dormant in every heart.

How little then is to be hoped from this plan of transporting English landlordism to Ireland, as a contrivance for letting down the Irish peasant to the level of the English farm laborer!

But another response has been made by the government itself to the interrogatory, "What shall be done to regenerate Ireland?" and made too at an enormous expense, but it is of a piece with the bright attempt above recorded, and worthy its paternity, and of course it has proved barren of useful results—English landlordism and English brutalization of the working classes, forming the *beau ideal* after which the government always shapes its measures.

I refer to the establishment of what are called the Queen's Colleges, three enormous structures, located at Belfast, Galway, and Cork, built and endowed by the government at an enormous outlay, to furnish educational facilities for the higher orders, and thus to arm them with still greater power to trample down the people, who are left in ignorance at their feet. The same outlay would have extended the facilities of common school education to every mud hovel in the island; but that would never do, it would defeat the great ends of government here, and so they will tell you with great complacency what the *national schools*, with 500,000 pupils, are doing for the people; that is, the schools of a private society, embracing one in 13 of the population, to which £120,000 are doled out by the government.

This is the way the government goes to work to "regenerate Ireland," and it is but another exemplification of of the knavery which for ages has been so successfully played

off upon the English working-classes, to swindle them out of their earnings and their humanity alike.

The fact, that these colleges have been laid under the ban by the Pope, so far as the Catholics are concerned, does not affect the question at all. It is better, far better, that they should stand empty, monuments of government folly, with their troops of professors feeding upon the government pap, without the footsteps of a student to break their solitude, if the people are to be left in ignorance.

There is a way to regenerate Ireland; nor is it necessary to empty its people upon some other portion of the globe to accomplish it. Hitherto they have received only insolence from their masters over the channel, and they have returned only undying hate. They cannot succumb to power as the English peasantry can, for they never were so enslaved and degraded in the feudal ages. They were bound to their feudal chiefs by the ties of kindred, and the authority exercised over them was paternal. And so it was in the highlands of Scotland, and hence the mistake that they can be cowed into submission with the same appliances which are so effectual in crushing the peasantry of England, who were slaves *de facto* in the feudal ages, and have *virtually* continued so to this day. (See Hallam, vol. ii. p. 90.)

There *is* a way to regenerate Ireland: give the Irish peasantry a chance to live, try the effect of kind and gentle treatment upon them, and see if they do not rise from their degradation. No people are more susceptible, more tractable and docile, or show a greater aptitude for improvement than the Irish, when approached in the right way. One of

the great woollen manufacturers of England, was formerly extensively engaged in manufacturing in Dublin, and he seemed to be well acquainted with the character and condition of the Irish people. I asked him if they were the intractable, remorseless, and savage beings the English generally represented them to be; to which he replied, that they were very far from it, and that they only required suitable treatment to make them as tractable and docile a people as exists upon earth. Often, he said, when, goaded to desperation by their oppressions, they collected in mobs, he had rode into the midst of them, and, when vengeance breathed from every lip, and murder flashed from every eye, had laid the tempest in a moment, by calling out to them in tones of gentle rebuke, tempered with words of kindness, and soon they would drop away, one after another, quietly to their homes, until all were gone.

And what a spectacle we have here, in the mutual ruin of landlords and tenants, ruin as deep and radical in the one case as in the other. Nay, I hesitate not to say, that desolation has done its work more fully upon the former than upon the latter. There is an elasticity in the poor crushed laborer, which, when his burden is removed, will bring him up to the level of hope and of stirring motives, and these, acting upon his dormant energies, quicken them into activity, and often lead to developments of character which astonish the world. But there is no such burden to be removed from the sinking landlord, no such elasticity to bring him up, no such dormant energies to be developed. Nay, the effect is reversed with him; enervated by a life of profligacy, and

chagrined by the loss of position, his relaxed and flabby energies sink to dormancy, and he is left a prey to his mortification, his regrets, and his vices—vices which shone resplendent when gilded by the sun of prosperity, but which, shorn of that lustre, only excite pity and contempt.

Such is the two-fold ruin which the landlord system has wrought out in this island, and which it is fast working out through the kingdom. Local circumstances have but hastened the crisis here, which is fast approaching upon the other side of the Channel, and it is the opinion of some of the wisest heads in England, that the closing catastrophe cannot be kept off many years longer; and the breaking up of the great landed interest there, will overthrow the feudal despotism which has governed the country from the days of the Norman.

CHAPTER XI.

VISIT TO THE SILK WEAVERS OF BETHNAL GREEN.

To the hand-loom silk weavers of Bethnal Green, in Spitalfields, (London,) I next directed my steps. There are said to be twenty thousand of these weavers at Bethnal Green; but their comparative intelligence and vivacity contrast strikingly with the ignorance and stupidity of the agricultural laborer. And their sensitiveness under their wrongs, and their spirit of vindictiveness toward their oppressors, present an equally striking contrast to the moping insensibility and spiritless cowing down under oppression every where witnessed in the rural districts.

In this part of London the houses are low, old, and dingy, many of them being in a very dilapidated condition.

At the first house I called, after ascending a rickety pair of stairs, I entered an apartment about twelve feet square where was a weaver at the loom, and a boy at the quill wheel, while upon a tattered couch in one corner, apparently far-gone with consumption, lay the emaciated wife of the weaver.

"Lor bless you!" said the weaver, "what could brought you to such a place as this?" I replied that I came from

curiosity, to see the operations of his trade, and the life he was living. "*The life we're living!*" he rejoined, "we don't live, we're not human, we're cattle, and dead cattle at that. Do you see this piece of silk I'm weaving—how nice and beautiful it is! It will be worn by her ladyship; and how proudly it will sail in the dance, while I, a poor weaver of Bethnal Green, must starve on four shillings and nine pence a week, which is the utmost I can earn by keeping the shuttle flying *fourteen hours a day*. Yes, *fourteen hours a day* I must work, work, work, sick or well, until I sink under it, and my poor body is laid under the turf. Two of my children the Lord has mercifully taken away from a life of suffering; and there is my poor wife just agoin', and nothing for her comfort—no physician, no medicine, no help, and no suitable food; and it'll be a mercy to her when she's gone. And so it is, this infernal government gives the rich all the advantage, while we, poor devils, who support them all, must suffer, suffer, suffer, and there's no end to it—and is that living? I tell you it isn't; it's a mockery of living, and the sooner we're over it the better."

Here he paused, and in lowered, mellowed tones, resumed, "Excuse me, master; I could not keep it; it's here (putting his hand to his heart); I feel it, I feel it; O, I do, I do! we're cattle—*I tell you we're cattle, and nothing else!*" smiting with his fist as he said it.

Shocked by such an unexpected outburst, I made no reply; but while the weaver adjusted the bobbin which he had held in his hand, and resumed the operations of the loom, I turned to the dying woman, whose low moans and

muttering accents had attracted my attention. She could scarcely speak by reason of her cough, and I did not attempt to understand her; but that ghastly, imploring look will never be effaced from my memory. I slipped a shilling into her hand, and the change which came over her was almost as if the ashes of the sepulchre had begun to stir. With uplifted, withered arms, she blessed me, and then buried her face in her pillow.

At the second house I found two looms, and quill-wheels, ragged beds, and children to match, the room being a trifle larger than the one I had just left.

The man seemed at first disinclined to conversation, and only made the shortest answers to my inquiries; but I succeeded at last in touching the right string. Having learned from him that his earnings were about six shillings a week, I asked him how he could support his family of seven children on even double that amount, to which he replied, "God knows;" and after a little pause, he thus delivered himself: "Eight and thirty years I have labored at this loom, often suffering for the necessaries of life; and it's all come to this at last, gray hairs, a broken constitution, rags and want. It didn't use to be so bad; but the *slaughter-house* men [employers] have done it (smiting with his fist)—they have cut under, and cut under, striving to undersell each other and foreigners, to get the trade and become rich, until they have brought us down to this—taking the bread from our mouths, and the clothes from our backs, to make up the deficiency of profit to themselves; and the cut-throats say they must do it, for they are making nothing; and yet they are

building splendid country-seats, and have their hounds, and their hunting-horses, and what not! But they'll catch it some day, they will; I tell you they'll catch it. Human natur can't bear every thing; and when we become desp'rate by suffering, what do we care for their jails, where we can be better supported than at honest labor; or for transportation, so long as it takes us away from this accursed country? It is my native country, and I have tried to love it, but all the love I ever had for it has been burnt out by suffering, and now I only hate it, and hate the home of sorrow and of suffering it has given me, and hate every thing about it, and will hate as long as God gives me breath. God knows I owe nothing but hate, hate, hate, to a country which has given me nothing but slavery and rags, privation and suffering, in return for a life of hard labor at this loom."

Interrupting him here, I said to him, there was such a thing as duty to one's country, bad as we might think it, and great as might be its oppressions.

"Duty!" said he, "it's a duty to hate what God hates; and I wouldn't b'lieve in a God that wouldn't hate such a damnable country as this. If he's good and just, he hates it, and I'll hate it too."

At the third house, I ascended a pair of stairs, which I feared at every step would give way, and entered a low, small, and comfortless apartment, close and stifling, with a single loom, and other things to correspond; but as the man at the loom only answered in monosyllables, and seemed reduced to sullen despair, I left him to brood over his misery, and proceeded to a fourth.

And here I was received with a torrent of garrulousness from the little man of the shuttle, which seemed to burst forth as from a safety valve.

"And you're come to see one of the sights of London, I s'pose—the rags and misery of the poor weavers of Bethnal Green," said he. "Please to pay your admission fee, for we're nothing but a caravan of wild beasts, kept here for show. Lor' bless me, if I shouldn't like to be caged up, and carried about the country; and, dear me, what good picking I would have."

But you must hope for better times, said I.

"*Hope!*" he resumed; "I hope only for death. My poor wife and two of the children are gone, thank God, and I hope and pray that the rest of us may soon follow, and get out of our misery."

But surely you are not glad your wife and children are dead?

"*Glad!*" indeed I am. I shouldn't be fit to live or die if I wasn't glad. Poor things, how they suffered! But, thanks be to God, it's all over with them now. And what a wretch I should be if I didn't rejoice that they are dead! And these children, it would be a mercy if they were taken away; and I hope they will die, for I know it would be better for them than to live."

But you are crazy: no man in his senses would talk so; and besides, have you no natural affection?

"*Natural affection!*" What's the use of natural affection under such a horrid government as this, where we can get nothing to make the poor creatures comfortable. It

would only add misery to misery. No, no, my natural affection runs all the other way. I don't want them to stay here to be miserable; and I hope they will die, and go where they will be better off, thanks be to God."

I learn that these people are mostly Chartists, that they hold political meetings, discuss freely the policy and measures of government, and are ready, many of them, to shoulder their muskets and take the field in defence of their rights—the right of labor as well as wealth to be represented in the national councils.

It is proper to add, however, that the hand-loom weavers, the stocking weavers, and the lace makers are the most depressed portion of the manufacturing operatives.

It should further be added, that these weavers have seen better days than these. Their descent and early history are of a highly interesting character. Their forefathers were French refugee Protestants, who fled to this country for protection, upon the revocation of the edict of Nantz, by the fourth Henry, which exposed all the Protestants in France to butchery. They were famous for the cultivation and love of flowers, their houses then being apart, so as to give scope for the indulgence of this favorite propensity, which, to this day, characterizes them as a people. Pots of flowers are to be seen upon the window-sills of nearly all the weavers, while every little patch is devoted to their culture; and, one would think, that a people thus prone could not be very bad. They are equally famous for the rearing of pigeons, vast numbers of which may always be seen ranging through the air, in the neighborhood of Spitalfields.

To my astonishment, their predilection for these innocent amusements has been gravely alleged by a profound political economist as one reason of their sufferings, and in balancing matters between them and their employers, he comes to the sage conclusion, that operatives should not concern themselves about such things. But he has not a word to say about the palaces and parks, the hounds, hunting horses, &c., &c., which their employers enjoy at the expense of their toil and their sufferings. The operative must not enjoy the luxury even of a flower, lest it should interfere with the debauchery of his superiors. Such is the financial calculation of one of the best writers of which England can boast. There seems to be something in the very atmosphere of the country which deadens all feeling for the poor man, as a creature invested with rights and capabilities of progress.

This love of flowers formerly had so deep a root that these people became famous for botanical researches. They had a flourishing botanical society, and also a mathematical society, a historical society, libraries, &c., and from among them arose such men as Dolland, the inventor of the acromatic telescope, Simpson and Edwards, afterwards renowned mathematical professors, and that only about a half century ago.

But pitiable is the spectacle they present now in the ranks of pauper labor, to which the wealth and splendor of this kingdom owe their origin, and fearful indeed is the contribution they make to the explosive material which underlies the government, there being not less than 100,000 of this class of weavers in the kingdom, all nearly equally depressed.

CHAPTER XII.

INTERVIEW WITH A DISTINGUISHED POLITICAL CHARACTER OF THE LIBERAL SCHOOL—HIS VIEWS OF THE DIFFERENT CLASSES, OF THE GOVERNMENT, ETC.

Desirous of being thoroughly posted up in government matters, I sought an interview with a member of parliament, to whom, as a statesman, the country owes more perhaps than to any other living man. I was cordially received, and full and definite answers were given to all my inquiries.

Upon my remarking to him that while I had been filled with admiration at many things I had seen in England, the conviction was every where forced upon me, that the government of the country was instituted and upheld for the benefit of the few, at the expense of the many, he replied, that the British government was essentially aristocratic in its character, and that the people generally gloried in it as such; that whenever it became unendurable by reason of its oppressions, in any particular, the people became restive, and there would be a popular ebullition, and the clamor could only be appeased by granting relief, and then the masses would settle back again into a quiescent state, perfectly satisfied as before, and thus they would remain until

some other form of oppression became equally unendurable, when there would be another ebullition, another concession, and another relapse; such a thing as a revolution in the government not being entertained or desired.

Few indeed, he said, was the number who desired a radical change in the government. Having been schooled from infancy to look upon the higher orders with great veneration, they would hardly know what to do with themselves if deprived of them by a revolution of the government; all their ideas of order and good government would be set afloat. This was the *general* feeling.

In reply to the question as to the estimated number of landholders in the kingdom, he said, Lord Fitz William reckoned the number at thirty to forty thousand, say thirty-five thousand, which would make only about one in eight hundred of the inhabitants of the united kingdom a landholder, and leave the remaining eight hundred to one, landless, and they loved to have it so, and seemed to have no desire that it should be otherwise.

The farmers, he said, did not want to own the land they cultivated, but seemed to prefer renting it from those above them, and the laborers they employed were just as well satisfied on their seven or eight shillings a week, or what was barely sufficient to satisfy their little wants, and had no higher aspirations. The English, he added, are a singular people, doggedly attached to their old ways, and delight to walk in the steps of their forefathers from generation to generation, without change, and without deviation.

I remarked to him that it looked very curious to me as

an American, to see those farm laborers marched into the Crystal Palace by hundreds, with little bits of red ribbon on their hats, like so many puppets, and I went on and related to him the conversation I had with them; and when I spoke of the reply one of them made to me, that they were not *prospering*, but were *haying* then, he burst into a laugh, and then said to me with emphasis, "Don't you tell that in America, don't you tell it, but I will tell it in the House of Commons."

He seemed to admit that that was a fair enough illustration of the intellectual condition of the agricultural laborers of this kingdom. In the particular kinds of work to which they were set, and to which they had been trained, they were great adepts, and were as nearly perfect as they well could be. A plowman was a plowman indeed, and no other man could turn such a furrow; a ditcher was thoroughly accomplished in his art, and if even a wythe was wanted, the man to whom it belonged to furnish it, would soon present one almost as nicely twisted as a rope. At the same time, he said, if they were asked who lived in yonder mansion, in full view from their own village, the short reply would probably be, "don't know." Beyond the particular duties to which they had been drilled, their minds seemed to be a blank.

Speaking of the desirableness of a subdivision of land, and of a distribution of proprietorship, I remarked to him, that my impression was that originally the land was parcelled out among his chiefs by William the Conqueror, and that from them it had been entailed from generation to generation. That, he said, was the beginning of the system, but

the nobility had managed in one way and another to get hold of large tracts since, until they had arrived at their present gigantic monopoly.

I here said to him, more to hear what he would say than for any other reason, that as these lands were originally parcelled out in this manner among favorites, without any equivalent having been given for them, it would seem as though the government would be justified, in view of the monstrous evils which have grown out of the system, in taking them back into its own possession, as a national domain, to be disposed of as it might think most conducive to the interests of the community. Here he laughed again, and said, it might look rather plausible, but it was to be considered, that there had been so many transferences, that very few of the present entail occupants were the lineal descendants of the original ones; and besides, they would be entitled to them by right of possession.

Having witnessed so many evils resulting from land monopoly here, and being aware that a bill making it illegal for any one person to hold more than five hundred acres of land, came within a single vote of passing the legislature of Wisconsin, the winter before I left the United States, I asked him what he thought would be the effect of such a law; to which he replied, that it must be, to a great extent, inoperative. In the first place, it would be very difficult to know how much land a person possessed in different localities; and then there would be numerous other ways of evading the law, such as deeding it to different members of the family, &c. And then, he said, he did not think America had much to appre-

hend from land monopoly, certainly not any such monopoly as exists here, so different were the feelings, habits, and general character of the people, and, he might have added, the institutions of the country.

I asked him if there was no possibility of breaking up the entail system, which had been the fruitful source of so much evil to the country. He said, that Sir Robert Peel fully intended to abolish the hereditary peerage, and expressed the conviction that, had he lived, he would have accomplished the object. He said, moreover, that vast numbers of the entail occupants themselves were getting to be heartily sick of the system; and the time was not distant when they would pray for deliverance from its trammels, for it often straitened and pinched them to the last degree. They had to keep up, at vast expense, a great establishment for parade and show, to support the dignity of the nation, and gratify the people. They were regarded in the light of patrons and examples in the counties in which they respectively lived, and were expected, and in a manner necessitated, to lead with a heavy amount all subscriptions for improvements and entertainments, such as church-building, horse-racing, &c. And then, there were the younger members of the family to be provided for, annuities to be paid to them, &c. These things, together with the reckless extravagance of many, had so embarrassed them, that great numbers of them were driven to such straits that they hardly knew which way to turn; and, he added, that there would yet, at no distant day, have to be some sort of a law passed providing for the sale of the encumbered estates of the nobility of England, as there had been in reference to those in Ireland.

I remarked to him, that I understood the British Government to consist of three co-ordinate branches, the monarch, the lords and the commons, each having separate, distinct, and antagonistic interests to maintain, the one checking and balancing the other; and that in this view of the subject, I had been surprised to find a great number of lords in the House of Commons, the popular branch of the government.

He replied, that they were only lords by courtesy, that is, the younger sons of lords. Still, I remarked, they did not consider themselves as a part of the common people; they were "sprigs of nobility"—all their sympathies were with the nobility, and they appeared to be entirely out of place in appearing as the representatives of the people.

"Very true," said he; "but two causes have operated to place them there. In the first place, their fathers and friends own so much land, and have so many dependent upon them, that they manage to get multitudes of votes for them; and then the foolish deference the people have for rank, operates largely in their favor.

I asked him if the Reform Bill of '32 ("the rotten borough act") did not sweep out many of this class of members. He said it did, and added, *but we must have another sweep.*

I told him I had noticed that the Ministers made their appearance in the House of Commons, and even had seats there, and took part in the discussions, and that bills before the House were called the Ministers' bills, as Lord John Russell's bill, Lord Stanley's bill, &c., and that it seemed to me to be incompatible with the dignity and independence

of the House—no such thing being allowed in the American Congress.

He replied, that it was getting to be understood of late that no man could be Minister, who did not harmonize in sentiment with the majority of the House, and who would not give his whole influence to carry out the views of that majority; and this being so, it was getting to be more and more the custom to let the Minister take charge of important bills, on account of the influence he would carry along with him.

This is a consideration which our people will be scarcely prepared to appreciate, with whom *reason* generally commands more deference than titles. Mr. Cobden was thus robbed of half the credit which was his due in carrying the great measure of corn law repeal. It was "Sir Robert Peel's bill," and the multitude were ready to shout it as his triumph; but that great and good man rebuked the injustice by publicly declaring that he took no credit to himself for the passage of that bill, and that the entire honor of it was due "to one Richard Cobden."

His views of the tythe system corresponded with those of a dissenting clergyman with whom I conversed, upon which subject some of our people have very erroneous impressions. It seems that the claim of the church to one tenth of the produce of the soil arises from the ownership of a proportion of the land which is vested in her. No injustice is done to the tenant farmer, for he only pays rent to two landlords instead of one, as he agreed to when he rented the land.

In regard to titles, which exert such an omnipotent sway upon this island, conferring unearthly consequence upon

mortal man, I was curious to know how they were made, and drew from him this important piece of information—that the monarch, through the minister, creates them out of nothing. "Let there be light, and there was light." This, he said, had ever been the prerogative of the monarch, and it had been effectually employed to gratify the propensities of the people.

He said he thought I must have been vastly interested in the parade made of such things in the papers, and especially in the country papers, whose columns were half filled up in describing the dresses, pastimes, &c., of the nobility, remarking that he thought the American papers, filled with accounts of railroad and other improvements, read quite as well.

He remarked, that I visited England under circumstances which would prevent my seeing the darkest shade of the picture, for nearly all classes were just then in a prosperous condition, or what they considered prosperous, bad as it must seem to me. By and by there would come round another periodical revulsion, and content would give place to restiveness and clamor, and parliament would again have to listen and succumb.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE POWER OF CASTE.

As nothing is so depressing, enervating, and corrupting, as the power of caste in this kingdom, I will give some illustrations of it which have fallen under my own observation.

At the hotel in London where I put up, there came in a man of quite respectable appearance, and called for refreshments for himself and two friends. The viands were soon smoking upon the table, and as I sat reading the Times, waiting my own turn, I could not but be interested in the social glee with which the little company enjoyed their repast.

But reckoning time came, and the bill so far exceeded the man's expectations, that he hesitated about paying it. By some blunder, he had gotten into a house of a higher order than belonged to his rank, and the bill so much exceeded what he had been accustomed to pay, that it seemed extravagant.

After some words, the master of the house charged him with being a *chop-house* customer, as he contended for chop-house prices, and told him he wanted nothing to do with him, and he had no business at his house.

That was a hard one, and the man seemed stunned by the blow, for he sat mute for a considerable time, and not a word was exchanged either between him and his friends, or the landlord. To be charged with being a *chop-house* customer, and to be convicted on his own testimony, and to have the evidence of it thrown in his face in the presence of his two friends, how could he hold up his head or utter a word?

At length he rallied himself, reluctantly drew forth his purse, paid the amount, and walked moodily away.

Chop-house! chop-house! thought I; and what is a chop-house? I had often seen the sign as I passed along the street, and stimulated by this queer colloquy, I determined, if possible, to find out, and so forth I sallied upon a tour of discovery, that is to say, as soon as I found it convenient.

Coming to a sign, and walking straight in, said I, Is this a chop-house? "Yes, sir," said a plump little specimen of humanity, as she came tripping along, "and please, sir," said she, "what will you have?" A good rump steak, said I, and a cup of coffee. "Please, sir, be seated, and here is the Times, and the Morning Chronicle, and the Daily News,"—"and here is Punch too," added she, with a leer.

Well, well, thought I, this is not so bad after all, as I sat "bolt upright" in one of the stalls, "rummaging" the newspapers. These stalls, by the way (slips for a single person, separated by high partitions), are common to hotels of the ordinary grade, as well as chop-houses.

But here comes the steak hissing hot, and the coffee

steaming from the pot; and not being an Englishman, I throw aside the newspaper (I will explain this another day) and apply myself to the subject matter before me. The steak is as fine as I ever tasted, and the coffee as good as can be got in England, (though that is not saying much, I confess,) and on the whole, I enjoy my repast; it is quite as good as I get at my hotel for three times the money.

Being ready for my departure, I threw down the price demanded, but as I turned to pass out, I noticed a shade of sadness upon the countenance of the damsel, in place of the smiles which had previously lit it up. What ailed her? I bethought me in a moment what it was, and threw her a penny, and instantly she was herself again. These little gratuities are all the poor things get, and it does one's soul good to see how thankful they are over them.

As I wended my way back to the hotel, I could not, for the life of me, feel myself degraded in the least. It required no more effort to hold up my head than it did before; and I strolled along, and looked around with the same careless ease, and on the whole I concluded that my dignity was not damaged at all.

But it so happened, and queerly enough, that while I was carrying on this investigation, I heard the term "tap-room customer" bandied. Tap-room! tap-room! and what could that be? I confess to a sort of squeamishness here which deterred me from bringing the merit of the thing to a similar test. But, from the inquiries I instituted, I learned that *it* was also an eating and drinking house, only lower down in the scale, with prices to correspond, designed, of course, for persons a peg lower in respectability.

And so it is; there is nothing to be heard here but class, class, class. The railroads have their first, second, third, and fourth classes of cars, but they do not begin to meet the case. In one instance I noticed the inscription, "Working-man's carriage," and turning to a gentleman standing by, said I, putting on a serious look, and pointing to it, I suppose that is the place for me, as I call myself a working man? "*You a working man?*" he exclaimed. To be sure, I am nothing else, said I.

And what crowns the climax in this matter, and turns the laugh against the whole thing, is that the stiffest of the aristocracy here find themselves eclipsed by an edition of their own system, which has been copied—who would have believed it—and carried into effect to a punctilio, by the poor working men themselves. Nowhere in this kingdom is the spirit of caste rifer or more jealous of its prerogatives, than it is away down among the Cornish miners. There are three orders of them, consisting, first, of those who work above ground, second, of those who sink the shaft, and third, of those who work the mines after the shafts have been sunk. The first are called *surface laborers*, the second, *tutmen*, and the third, *tributers;* and such power has the spirit of caste among them, that the highest class will have no social intercourse with the second, nor the second with the third. And what is singular, the high dignitaries among them are the *tributers*, the class that are buried for the greater part of their time in the bowels of the earth, while next in rank come the *tutmen*, who for a portion of their time are but partially buried from the light of day, leaving the poor surface laborers at the *fag-end*.

But do not be in haste to consider this an unnatural arrangement of classes. It is strictly in accordance with the established rules of caste. The *tributers* (who work the mines) earn the highest wages, the tutmen the next highest, and the poor surface laborers the least of all. All alike spend their entire earnings, but the higher orders among them are able to dress better, drink more, and play a higher game than the lower, whom they treat with the most supercilious contempt. The surface laborer may be seen crawling about under a becoming sense of his inferiority, while the tutman struts past him, without bestowing upon him the slightest notice, he, in his turn, being looked down upon with equal contempt by the passing tributer.

But let us ascend to the great exemplars of all this, the big tutmen, and tributers of the realm, who are divided off among themselves into clans about equally distinct; but the great gulf which separates all these idlers from the industrial classes, is the widest and deepest of all—a gulf across which the latter look with reverential awe.

This gulf, in all its depth and breadth, was one of the curiosities at the Great Exhibition. When the Exhibition first opened, the terms were such as to exclude the working classes—then, for a week or so, all were admitted on the same terms, but the nobility staid away. The "Times" said it was because the weather was cold, and added, that "the great numbers who attended *were not so sensitive to the changes in the barometer as their superiors*"—rather cool. After that, the admission fee was put at a crown on Saturdays, to exclude the working classes, that the idlers might

not be annoyed by their presence; and reduced to a shilling the other five days of the week, to draw them in, the idlers staying away.

But this arrangement was like to work calamitous results to the exhibition, by diminishing the attendance on the five days; not that any exception was taken to it, but because the lions were not there to be gazed at, as the chief attraction.

In view of this sad result, the "Times" and other dailies expostulated with the higher orders upon the subject, and entreated them, as they desired the success of the exhibition, to give their attendance on the other five days, however unpleasant and disgusting it might be to them to mingle with the people in the same building. They urged the consideration, that such an act of condescension and grace would have the effect to bind the hearts of the people still more closely to them—a matter in which they were themselves deeply interested. No attention was paid to this appeal.

And thus the big tutmen and the little tutmen play off this silly game, each after their own fashion, both alike making themselves a laughing-stock to all sensible men.

In giving these facts, it has been no part of my design to heap odium upon the time-honored institutions of this kingdom. The aristocracy here constitute a branch of the government, and there is something venerable about them as the representatives of by-gone ages. As a curiosity, they are as deserving of consideration as the disentombed remains of Pompeii and Herculaneum. If they could be pre-

served in a glass case, or by any other contrivance, as mementoes of the past, it were well, and edifying; but the idea of their having the privilege of playing off the same game upon the people now as in the dark centuries of the past, is rather preposterous.

Like the aged oak, which has weathered the storms of centuries, they are venerable objects; but unfortunately, like the Upas, they have stood only to shed a blight upon every thing beneath.

And what have they done? They have taken from labor its reward; they have erected barriers to the upward progress of the race; they have crushed aspiring energy, and they have pauperized a kingdom.

Progress is the law of our being—progress upward or downward; and when the upward progress of the race is hedged up, what remains for them but to sink, and stagnate, and fester in their own corruption?

Another law of our being is *imitation*, and another still is, that we more readily imitate the vices than the virtues of those above us. "Put this and that together," and what wonder is it that the working classes of England are what they are? Whatever may be the virtues of the high aristocrats of the land, the poor lutman only imitates their exclusiveness, their profligacy and their vices. Nor does it help the matter, that there are a dozen different orders between these extremes, and that the lowest in the scale takes pattern from the next above, but rather aggravates it. Sad indeed is the spectacle, to see this mighty influence for evil sweeping down from order to order, until it has overwhelmed them all.

CHAPTER XIV.

EFFECT OF CASTE UPON THE CHARACTER OF DIFFERENT CLASSES.

THERE is a profound lesson to be learned in studying the effect of caste here upon the characters of the different orders. From this governmental machine, as many distinctly marked varieties of character are turned out as there are classes; and all as diverse from the American stamp, as they are from each other.

First, take the case of the privileged orders, and what an advantage it would seem to be, in the cultivation of the social and amiable virtues, to be exempt from the harassing vexations of business, and from all the cares and perplexities of life! What multitudes have their tempers soured and spoiled by these things! How often is a peevish and fretful spirit, the bane of all peace, thus nursed into being! and how often, too, does the chafed spirit, wrapped in morose and sullen seclusion, look with contempt upon the amenities of life!

It is very true, that these things *should* have the wholesome disciplinary effect to train us all to a confirmed and habitual amiability, and the practice of every private and

social virtue; and thus improved, the trials of this probationary state are an inestimable blessing to humanity; but, alas! to how few are they ever made to yield these "peaceable fruits," and to what multitudes do they bring forth only "briars and thorns!"

But these favored ones seem to be delivered from the effects of the curse. Raised above the necessity of labor, above the vexations of business, and above all the ordinary cares and perplexities of life, their amiable and social virtues are exempt from that severe probationary ordeal, to which those of ordinary mortals must ever be subjected. The consequence is, that though they can produce no examples of the moral sublime in character, such as results only from successful conflict with trials and difficulties, it would be strange, indeed, if they were not characterized for the more passive virtues of which I am speaking, beyond the average of the race. And the cultivation of these virtues is, at the same time, entirely consistent with indulgence in some of the most debasing vices. Indeed, social virtues and social vices are inseparably connected, and form strong points in all such characters, their whole time being given to their joint cultivation.

If we descend to the middle classes, (those who are not raised above the necessities and vexations of business, but yet enjoy a competence,) we shall find them enjoying equal advantages over our own people, in the cultivation of the amiable and social virtues.

In the first place, their easy, dog-trot way of doing things, is favorable to such a result. The same cause which depresses

the working classes in the dust, keeps the middle in a state of comparative inertness, by reason of the barriers it raises to their upward progress, and this is conducive to the development of these virtues.

What an impulse is given to the energies of our people by the opening prospects created by their facilities to rise! What a restlessness, turmoil, and chafing of spirit are thus begotten! What a concentration of the thoughts and affections upon the one engrossing object, and in the hot pursuit, what clouds of dust often arise to obscure the moral vision; and how often are the social and amiable virtues left to die of neglect, or to be choked out by antagonistic vices which at the same time are nursed into being! And what a hot-bed of envy, malice, and the whole kindred tribe is thus created!

But under such a system as this, which puts a *damper* upon all this feverish excitement, and keeps down aspiring energy, there is little chance for the development of this class of evil passions. Envy and its kindred train, cannot even germinate where there is no competition and no progress, for not only must its object be exalted above it, but the way upward to the same level, must be open to it; otherwise there are no elements to keep it alive, or to quicken it into being, for, in the nature of things, it can find no object upon its own level, and none upon a higher, to which there is no hope of rising.

One would suppose, that there might be some degree of this emulation with its attending evils among persons of the same class, but the truth is, that there are so many subdivisions of rank among those of the same general class, as to operate as a pretty effectual check.

The same remark might have been made in reference to the higher orders themselves. There are so many subdivisions among them, and there is so much of a gulf between each, that not much play is given to the class of vices of which I am speaking.

Under these circumstances, it might be expected that the amiable and social virtues should find ample development here, and so it is in fact. With the higher orders, this is all that makes life tolerable, and saves them from dying of ennui. Nor are the middle classes at all behind them in social enjoyment, while they are *comparatively* free from their social vices. It is their delight to drop in, without form or ceremony, to spend an evening in chit-chat with a neighbor, over "the social glass;" and generally, when one goes out for the purpose, he calls upon one or two other neighbors, which may be in his way, to go along with him. England is full of these little circles every evening, and thus an intimate and endearing social relation, is kept up among persons of the same class, at the same time that there is little to interrupt the even tenor of a good understanding.

And, unfortunately, the same social customs prevail among the working classes, to the utmost extent of their humble means, especially among the operatives in the manufactories, journeymen mechanics, &c., which drains off all the little surplus which the more expert workmen might otherwise have, and subjects all, to a greater or less extent, to privation and want, no inconsiderable proportion of their earnings being thus expended.

Of the effect of this system upon the characters of the

agricultural laborers as a class, I have spoken at large in another place.

I will now refer to some additional national peculiarities which grow out of this social conformation.

It is no wonder at all, in view of these things, that we eat so fast, and they so slow. We eat as we do every thing else, and so do they. It would be quite as much out of character for us to eat slow, as it would be for them to eat fast. And besides, slow eating is a part of their social system, and slow drinking too. Their hour-and-a-half dinners are designed as much for the gratification of the social, as of the animal nature. In both eating and drinking, it is wonderful what a moderation they observe, with all their excess.

In speaking of my visit to the chop-house, I said, that, not being an Englishman, I threw aside the newspaper, and sat myself down to my repast. An Englishman would have kept on reading at least two or three minutes before he would have stirred, and then, instead of throwing the paper aside, he would have taken it to the table with him to read and eat, read and eat, read and eat, until the time came to adjourn, which would be far from coming in a hurry. Or, if he calls for a bottle of ale, or wine, or a glass of brandy, presently a rosy-cheeked maid makes her appearance, and sets it down before him. But does he seize hold of it at once, and gulp it all down at a lift? Neither the one nor the other; he is reading the newspaper, or conversing with a friend, and he continues to read or talk on for the space of about five minutes, as though he did not care a fig about it. He then turns himself leisurely around, lifts

the beverage to his lips, takes a sip, returns it to its place, and again he is reading the newspaper, or conversing with his friend, as the case may be. Another five or ten minutes elapses, and he takes another sip, and thus he goes on until the whole is sipped up. What a contrast this to the cataract impetuosity of our drinkers, who would seem to be intent upon swallowing both tumbler and contents at a "swig." But we drink, when we drink at all, as we do other things, and so do they.

Hence, notwithstanding what we call loose habits are much more common here than with us, they are not near as apt to end in confirmed drunkenness. There is no such headlong rush to ruin among the sons of the wealthy in London, and Liverpool, and Birmingham, and Manchester, and Leeds, as there is in New-York, and Boston, and Philadelphia, and Baltimore, and Pittsburgh, and Cincinnati, and New-Orleans. Ruin enough there is here, in all conscience, and far more than with us; but there is no such headlong ruin. It is a slow, widely-diffused, regularly measured-off ruin.

It is equally wonderful with what deliberation and composure these people will go about to divide up their time between business and pleasure, and how they will hold the one at bay, while they give their attention to the other, no more suffering business hours to interfere with those of pleasure than they do pleasure hours to intrude upon those of business. And what a contrast is here too, to the character of our own people, who are either all business, or all pleasure, either climbing their way up in the scale of wealth and respectability, or plunging headlong to ruin.

And the same distinctive characteristics are observable in conversation. It is true the case *seems* to be reversed in our *slow* and their *fast* talking; but not so; their fast talking is but the natural result of the rising tides of social feeling, which set the organs of speech a-going with tremendous power, while the low stage of social feeling in our people acts but feebly upon the speaking organs.

But the true test here is to be seen in the manner of replying to an argument. When beaten in argument, these people are not near as apt as our own to rally themselves afresh, strike a higher key, and come down upon you with an increased torrent of words without meaning. There are exceptions, it is true; and I have known Englishmen who were perfect Hotspurs in argument, especially in relation to any matter which affected the national renown. But as a general thing, the better bred classes are very courteous in argument, and when beaten, seldom do more than put in a query. And when, on the other hand, they know you to be in the wrong, and have a full argument in hand to set you right, they do not draw themselves up and come down upon you with annihilating power, as our go-ahead people are apt to do, but far oftener preface the coming thunderbolt which is to lay you prostrate at their feet, with "Please excuse me, sir,"—and that's the way.

CHAPTER XV.

PHILOSOPHY OF IDOLATRY AS HERE EXEMPLIFIED — ALSO OF THE POWER OF THE HIGHER ORDERS FOR EVIL.

In the remarks in the preceding chapter on the effects of caste upon the character of the different classes here, we are furnished with a clue to the entire secret of the idolatrous regard bestowed by the lower upon the higher orders. We often wonder how it can be, knowing that our own people, similarly circumstanced, would be inspired with feelings of a directly opposite character. But the true reason is that above given, that envy and its kindred passions can have no existence toward those who are regarded as for ever unapproachable. The privileged orders are more than heaven-high above the orders below, for heaven is far more accessible than the lofty positions they occupy. Hence the aspiring passions of those below, find nothing in them, their position, or trappings, on which to fasten, and retire from the field, or are killed down, giving full scope to idolatrous regard, which takes exclusive possession. If the way were as open to their upward progress as it is to our own people, idolatry would soon give place to those passions, and the whole system be tumbled into ruin. It is a shrewd contrivance. This is the

reason that the Grand Lama of Thibet, who is the most unapproachable of all the despots of earth, is actually worshipped as a god, and the reason too of all the superstitious regards which are bestowed upon the tyrants of the earth, both great and small.

And this feeling thus monopolizing the hearts of the people here, to the exclusion of the aspiring passions, and of all personal considerations, comes nearer to absolute worship than I had supposed it possible. In illustration of this, I will relate some facts which have fallen under my observation, and the circumstance that one or two of them relate to the queen, does not render them the less applicable, for what the queen is to the kingdom, every nobleman is in his own county, and indeed the influence of some noblemen is scarcely less widely diffused than that of the queen.

When at Cheltenham, (a great watering place,) I was expressing my admiration of the rural beauties of the place to the landlord of the hotel where I put up, to which he, of course, agreed in full; but with a deep sigh and sorrowful look, he remarked, that the place had been almost forsaken of late, and added, with emphasis, "If the queen would only make us one visit, it would set the place right up." And so it would; and it would be nothing but Cheltenham, Cheltenham, Cheltenham, from one end of the kingdom to the other, and from year's end to year's end.

Another fact I have, fully justifies this conclusion. When I was at Glasgow, I attended church a part of the day on the Sabbath, at the old cathedral occupied by Dr. McFarlane of the established church (Presbyterian), which was well

filled; but the gentleman who accompanied me remarked, that for years it had been well nigh deserted, the secession from the establishment having drawn away the greater part of the congregation, until, about a year previous, when the queen passed a Sabbath at Glasgow, and attended this church, and from that time the church had been thronged every Sabbath.

If that be not divine worship, it would be difficult to show what is.

And that is the kind of influence which radiates from every nobleman in the land upon all around him. Each one is regarded as the "father of the county" in which he resides. There is no computing the extent of the influence which is thus shed down upon the people. Indeed it is not going too far to say, that this nation is morally what that influence has made it. The nobility and gentry have but to patronize a virtue to give it favor with all classes of the people; or frown upon a vice, and all are in equal readiness to join them in hunting it from the land. They have but to fix an opprobrious name to the object of their dislike, whether it be good, bad, or indifferent, and it is echoed and re-echoed down through every gradation of society, to the lowest rabble in the street. The term Chartist formerly commanded respect, and men of character were not ashamed of the title; but by a simple curl of the lip, an accent, and a nod, these high and complacent ones have converted it into a term of reproach, insomuch that even liberals, for the most part, have cast it from them as a disreputable thing; the only reason assigned for attaching to it special obloquy being that it implies the em-

ployment of physical force in the last extremity, if reforms cannot be effected without; and yet, who believes that a single step has ever yet been taken in the slow march of reform, or ever *will* be, but from fear of physical force?*

And so it is; public sentiment throughout all its ramifications, is squared to meet their high approval. As an instance of the influence they are capable of exerting for good, take the case of profane swearing, the practice of which has been scouted from all respectable society, solely because they have expunged it from the vocabulary of a gentleman.

And here I cannot but pause for a moment over the ludicrous mistakes of some of our own *swearing gentlemen* in making their debut upon this side the water. I know not when or where I have been ashamed of my country, or felt the slightest mortification, except when I have come in contact with this low tribe. Amid all the abominations of the Old World, none have struck me with a profounder disgust than the spectacle of one of my own starched-up countrymen, claiming to be the embodiment of American refinement, in the attitude of delivering himself of the *Almighty oath*, and casting about with a look which seemed to say, "Now I have settled my claims to the highest consideration in the Old World," when, in fact, he was only regarded as having displayed the attributes of a vulgar fool. This de-

* Since the above was written, Chartism is beginning to hold up its head again. Two hundred thousand persons are said to have attended the funeral of a Chartist leader recently in Yorkshire.

grading, unprovoked, gratuitous, bootless, and swaggering vice is so common with us, so accustomed are we to the sound of stupid oaths, that we cease to be affected by the monstrous impropriety. And I am sure, if our people generally (our nobility) were to give their ears an eighteen months' repose from the vulgar din, as I have done, a public sentiment would soon arise in their midst, before which it would slink away from among us.

But to return, how forcibly is the almost unlimited power of the nobility and gentry to give shape to public sentiment, thus exemplified? But unfortunately for this kingdom, that power has been but too effectually employed for evil. This may be said to have been a necessary, at all events, an inevitable consequence of the system.

It has often been said, that the moral character of a people can never rise higher than that of the gods they worship, and never was a sounder doctrine promulgated. What but voluptuousness is expected of the worshippers of a voluptuous deity? Who but bacchanalians can ever be worshippers of Bacchus? And what but blood-thirstiness can characterize the worshippers of a blood-thirsty god?

It is the law of all rational existences, not only in our world, but in all worlds, that the character of the worshipper assimilates itself to that of the Deity worshipped. Nor are the people of England an exception. I do not say that they absolutely worship the nobility, but their reverence for them is so near akin to downright worship, that the assimilating process is continually going on, insomuch that it may be affirmed in the general, that what the nobility are in

moral character, the people of England are. This, of course, admits of exceptions.

What the character of the nobility actually is, may be learned from facts which I have given in another place. Indeed it were scarcely necessary to give facts at all, to establish the proof of their almost universal moral corruption. A reference to the nature of the case is quite sufficient for that purpose. It is almost as if a set of men had been set apart and supported at the public charge, on purpose to deluge the nation with moral pollution.

That there are some good and exemplary people among the nobility and gentry, in spite of the disadvantages of their position, is not to be questioned, and the more credit is to be awarded to them, in consideration of their singularity. They are rare exceptions. The mass of them are morally just what we are authorized to expect of human nature under such circumstances. They are naturally no worse than other people; it is the fault of the system; no set of men on earth could sustain a reputable moral character under it. It is at war with the laws of nature and of revelation alike.

I have often conversed with persons in the middle classes about their vices, and their calamitous influence upon the people, and they always admit the facts. When they speak of their vices, however, it is generally in a sort of half suppressed under-tone, as though they thought they were committing a sin, and had a sort of apprehension that some terrible evil might overtake them by way of retribution. I have been amazed at the tender reserve they often manifest upon the subject.

At the same time, they seem to think the nation would be irretrievably disgraced by the loss of its dignity, if these persons were necessitated to curtail their extravagances in the least, even though half the kingdom were starving for bread as the consequence. Absolutely, I have heard tenant farmers plead lustily in favor of the restoration of the corn laws, (which would take bread from the mouths of starving millions,) because they considered it essential to the dignity of the nation, that their landlords should not be necessitated to reduce their style of living.

To keep up the dignity of the nation then, it is necessary that the landlords should be profligates, for nothing else, as a general thing, can they be, with such a style of living. To keep up the dignity of the nation too, the people must be subject to their debauching influences. And, if need be, to keep up the dignity of the nation, the people must suffer hunger and cold, starvation and death.

CHAPTER XVI.

"THE GREAT GULF" BETWEEN THE HIGH AND THE LOW.

THE Times, in speaking of the popular demonstration of loyalty to the queen, on the occasion of her visit to Manchester, says of the assembled multitude, that "there were many among them *cursed with an education, and instincts above their condition*," and adds, that "all alike were charmed by the spell of her presence, although she was exalted above them *out of sight*, and separated from them *by a gulf which nothing short of the most romantic sentiment could pass*."

And again, "They saw the proudest and wealthiest of the land, whom they had been wont to regard as *a superior order of beings*, paying a still greater homage to one above them all, the sovereign of twenty-six millions of British subjects, and of one eighth part of the population of the globe."

Here then we have it—"many of them were *cursed* with education and instincts above their condition." To understand this, it is necessary to call to mind the fact, that the large manufacturing towns have ever been the hot-bed of liberalism; that many of the operatives are educated, and that all of them have been *stirred* by the spirit of inquiry,

which originated with the more intelligent and better educated, and that in the agitation all have become more or less aroused through the reflected light which has fallen upon them, insomuch that they are many degrees above the stupid masses who toil in the fields, in point of intelligence and spirit. Here all discontent under the oppressive measures of government, has uniformly originated, and here all measures of reform have found their principal champions and supporters. The "education and instincts" of many of them, make them feel that they are men and have rights, and that seems to obliterate that awful gulf which nothing short of "the most romantic sentiment" can pass. Hence their comparative enlightenment is deemed a curse to the country; and what is this but another open and shameless avowal that the government is based upon the ignorance and degradation of the people?

And that *great gulf*, and that *romantic sentiment*, so unblushingly acknowledged; how strikingly do they illustrate the idolatrous regard of the masses here for those above them, of which I have spoken, as being the basis of their loyalty, leading them to look up to those "wealthiest and proudest of the land, *as a superior order of beings*."

That is it; for ages upon ages, this game has been played off upon the stupid multitude. Their very hearts' blood has been wrung from them, and all the energies of life worn away, to furnish this "superior order of beings" with the means of decking themselves with the trappings of pomp and pride, and then they have bowed submissively down, to be crushed by the Juggernaut which they themselves have created.

"The sovereign of twenty-six millions of British subjects," and some of them, forsooth, are *cursed* with an education, and know how to read and write, and have *instincts* too, which belong to humanity; "and of one eighth of the population of the globe," including the plundered and beggared millions of India. Truly, what a halo of glory radiates from the crowned head of "the great Queen Victoria!"

Seriously, I am at a loss to know whether the editor of the Times is in sober earnest, or whether he covertly designs to make a burlesque of British royalty. The truth of the matter is, disguise it as they will, that if the "brutal" part of the population are taken into the account, Queen Victoria is *the sovereign of a nation of paupers.* A careful estimate will show, that the proportion who are liable to be sent to the poor-house at any time when they get sick, or become infirm, amounts to three-fourths of the whole population of the kingdom. I have presented this view of the subject here again and again, without fear of contradiction. Only the other day, I was in company with a whole room-full of manufacturers from Manchester, when, as they were congratulating themselves upon the prosperous state of the country, I said to them, Gentlemen, how can that country be called prosperous, three-fourths of whose population are paupers, and liable to be sent to the poor-house at any time? Can that country be called prosperous, in which there is only here and there a man who has any thing on which to subsist beyond the present hour? It came like a thunderbolt upon them, but they received it all in kindness, nor did they attempt to dispute the position.

Such are some of the gems which sparkle in the diadem of the British Queen, and such the great gulf which separates her from the mass of her subjects. But unfortunately the *romantic sentiment* required in the latter to cross it, will not satisfy their hunger nor clothe their nakedness. And although they might have thrown up their caps at sight of "the royal pair," and enjoyed a sort of animal ecstasy in so doing, which made them forgetful of their miseries for the time being, yet those miseries remained a stern reality notwithstanding; and when the pageant that bewildered them passed away, a forgetfulness of their woes passed with it, and the lightness of their hearts must have changed to heaviness as they wended their way to their destitute homes.

And if we cross the Irish Sea, what do we see there? Thousands, and tens of thousands, flying from their country to escape the miseries of starvation—flying from country, home, friends, and every thing, to take refuge in a strange land, thousands of miles away—flying as for their lives, and with all the energy of despair. They cannot live upon "romantic sentiment;" for if they could, half a million now in their graves might have been saved from the miseries of starvation. No, no, that is not the food to satisfy their wants; and there are multitudes in these Islands who feel more and more deeply every day the necessity of something more substantial to live on.

At this same Manchester there has been another great gathering lately, to hear a reformer discourse upon the evil to which I have alluded in another place, viz., filling up the House of Commons with titled personages, who, though

they do not actually belong to the nobility, technically so called, are offshoots from it, and are identified with it in sympathy and interest, and even wear its titles *by courtesy*. He was willing that they should have a representation in the Commons, in proportion to their numbers, but no more.

His speech was received with great applause by the multitude; but for his presumption, the "Times" comes out upon him in great wrath, and thinking to turn his own weapons against him, exclaims, "And so the House of Commons must be composed *chiefly* of men who cannot write, who cannot even read, according to this plan of filling it up with a proportionate number from each class."

What a humiliating confession, and yet, how coolly impudent! But such are the beauties of this government; it consigns the multitude to barbaric ignorance, and then makes that ignorance a reason for excluding them from all participation in the government; and all this, we are told, with equal coolness, because that "government is based upon the supposition of such difference of classes."

But notwithstanding these humiliating admissions in reference to the necessary workings of the system, there is much said here about the country being overstocked with inhabitants. They do not contend, that if it were otherwise, the condition of the laboring classes would be much improved, but only that there would be fewer paupers in the workhouse, and beggars in the street.

It is all *twaddle* to talk about the country being overstocked with inhabitants as an excuse for these things. If the country were emptied of half its inhabitants, the same

vicious system would produce the same vicious results. Nay, how much better was it half a century ago, when the population of the kingdom was not more than half what it is at present? Away then with such nonsense; the country is not overstocked with inhabitants. It is capable of demonstration in figures, that there are no more people upon these islands than could live here comfortably, independently, and happily, if the country were well governed, and each class were allowed to enjoy the fruit of their own labors, and there were no corrupting and enervating influences to work their way downward among the masses. Easily could it be demonstrated, that double the present population of the kingdom could be supported here in competence and comfort under a different system of things. But, that the few may revel in idleness, and steep themselves in debauchery, the many must be doomed to toil and to suffering to furnish the means, and to ignorance and degradation to make them content.

CHAPTER XVII.

CHARACTER OF THE PEOPLE CONFORMABLE TO THE MODELS BEFORE THEM.

To the fact that there are a great many excellent people in England, I have already borne cheerful testimony. I have also given a good degree of credit to the institutions of the country, as being favorable to the cultivation of the amiable and social virtues. But unfortunately they are equally, and even more favorable to the prevalence of social vices, and of a general corruption of character. I have shown this to be a necessary result of the barriers which are interposed to upward progress, and of the idolatrous regard of the lower for the higher orders, prone as men naturally are to imitate the vices rather than the virtues of those above them. And when these model characters, to use their own language, are regarded as "*a superior order of beings*," who can set bounds to the evil influences they must shed down upon all beneath? This must be an extraordinary people to pass the ordeal unscathed. Let us look a little into the matter.

To begin with the journeymen mechanics, I learn that it is a universal custom with them to spend Monday and Tuesday of each week in dissipating upon the earnings of

the other four; and that their employers never expect them at their work, as a general thing, until Wednesday following. This is every where spoken of as an established custom throughout the kingdom. It is the nearest approximation they can make to the life of idle and profligate ease, which constitutes the earthly paradise of those to whom they look up "as a superior order of beings." To enjoy this heaven three days of the week (including Sabbath), they starve themselves the other four, and thus squander every thing as they go along, having the comfortable hope of a home in the workhouse at the last end.

It seems to be regarded as a mark of aristocatic distinction with this class thus to play the lord three days in the week, and an indication of inferior instincts in the man who should submit to delve at his task during the whole six days.

They are prepared to appreciate the privilege the more from the fact, that during their apprenticeship state, they are kept to a very rigorous servitude, and on very inadequate food; and *that* notwithstanding the parent or guardian has to pay a considerable sum to the master, thirty pounds being the first year's instalment.

To rise from such a state of slavery to the enjoyment of a three days' weekly exemption from labor, with its accompanying indulgencies, opens as proud an area to the unfledged journeyman, as does the accession to a lordship to the young candidate for ancestral honors.

The same practice prevails among the many myriads, who burrow in the bowels of the earth, and who only

emerge to the light of day to give themselves up to beastly excess until their earnings are exhausted. At Kilbirnie, Scotland, where there are four thousand of these miserable beings employed, one of the proprietors gave me a most revolting description of their character and condition. In the first place, he said, none but those of desperate character could be induced to enter the mines at all, and so depraved were they, that they were regarded as being beyond the reach of all reclaiming influences, and nobody thought of trying to do any thing for them. They had always been in the habit of paying them weekly, as was the general custom, but they never expected them to re-enter the mines until they had squandered all in drunken carousal. To obviate this evil to some extent, they adopted the practice of paying them only once in two weeks, and now they pay them monthly, so that a monthly spree has to suffice. This, he thought, was a fair specimen of the character and condition of miners generally throughout the kingdom, whose number he estimated at a million.

The operatives in the manufactories are kept to their task five days and a half in the week, being let out on Saturday afternoon, but they seem resolved to indemnify themselves for the long confinement, by throwing the reins upon the neck of indulgence, when relieved from their toil, and by Monday morning they have expended a large portion of their weekly pay. The more expert workmen might save something every week, but very few indeed think of such a thing. I have expostulated with them on the subject, and the one only reply has been, that they "want to enjoy life as they go along."

And then, consider how many hundreds of thousands of this class there are, insomuch that large cities are but great hives which swarm with them. In the city of Bradford, which you may never have heard of (where there are tens of thousands of them) there assembled, on a late occasion, twelve men, and those twelve men were the employers of thirty thousand workmen. And then, think of the thousands whose operatives, though less numerous, are yet in the aggregate, almost "like the sands of the sea-shore for multitude," and you may form some conception of the amount of misery which such habits entail upon them. The very few * who deposit their little surplus in the "Savings Bank," are exceptions. The mass never trouble themselves about the future until they feel its woes.

Some conception of the amount of money expended in ale-house enjoyments by the laboring poor from their little earnings, may be formed from the fact, that nearly one-fourth of all the tillable land in the kingdom is devoted to barley culture, and that still the demand for barley for brewing pur-

* According to the published account of the Savings Bank of Manchester and Salford (the great manufacturing metropolis of England), for 1842, it appears that only one in nine of the depositors were operatives in the manufactories, or in any way connected with them, either as spinners, weavers, and their assistants, or as printers, bleachers, dyers, packers, engravers, and designers. Very far the largest class were female domestic servants. I have moreover learned from the most unquestionable source, that among the one million or more depositors in the Savings Banks of the kingdom, the working classes, distinctively so called, make but a sorry figure.

poses is so great, that it bears about the same price as wheat. Nor is the fact, recently stated by Mr. Cobden, that the annual duty on malt alone amounts to between 5 and £6,000,000, or from 25 to $30,000,000, at all less significant. And that other little fact, published in the papers the other day, that the single establishment of Barclay & Co., London, turned out 25,000 barrels of beer in three days, is not without import.

And what a story is it to tell, that the proprietors of these great establishments, are, to a great extent, the proprietors of the low beer-shops to which the poor laborer is lured to spend his weekly pay, and that from this source mainly their princely revenues are derived. In these clustering dens which bloated wealth has established for the sordid purpose, the laborer is not only despoiled of his hard earnings, but converted into a thief and a highwayman, and turned out to prey upon the community, while the spoiler rises high in wealth and *respectability*—sometimes to a lordship.

Go where you will in the towns here, (and there is little else but towns,) and you are surrounded with beer-shops and beer-topers. From morning till night, and from night till morning almost, nothing is to be heard but beer, beer, beer. *Water*, why they will stare with amazement if you ask for it. What can the man want of water? Often have I been asked, whether I would have hot water or cold, when I have inquired for the article, it being taken for granted that something stronger was to come along with it. Absolutely, I have not seen a drop of clear water drank, to my recollection, since I have been in the kingdom, except what I have drank myself.

I have incidentally been let into some of the deeper mysteries of beer-drinking in this kingdom. I refer to the discovery I have made of the fact, that there are regularly organized drinking clubs all over the kingdom, a clue to which I obtained as follows: being desirous of seeing an extensive farmer in the neighborhood of York, and learning that he had a son who kept a hotel in the city, I called upon the latter, and was informed by him, that his father would be in that day, to meet with the Chickory Club. Chickory Club! said I, what is that? "O, nothing," said he, "only to meet and take a glass."

In due time, the old gentleman made his appearance, and after some conversation with him, I asked him about the Chickory Club, but he affected not to understand me, and turned the conversation upon the culture of chickory, which, by the way, is a root extensively grown here, and used all over the kingdom as a substitute for coffee, their best coffee here being adulterated and spoiled with it.

But a day or two after, I arrived at Stockton-on-Tees, just in the dusk of evening, and, upon entering one of the principal hotels, I found it full of gabbling beer-drinkers, whose visages could be but dimly seen through clouds of tobacco smoke. I was about to beat a retreat, when the lady of the house advanced, and apologized by saying, that two clubs met there that night, but that, after supper, I could go to the top of the house (the upper story) and lock myself in, and I would be safe. And so to the top of the house I went, locked myself in for the night, and found all safe in the morning.

I afterwards found that these clubs exist everywhere, and among all classes; London is full of them. "Dr. Johnson's Tavern," the same where the *great moralist* used to meet with the drinking-club, of which himself, Dean Swift, &c., were members, is a perfect haunt for drinking-clubs to this day. I went, one evening, in company with an esteemed friend (a Leeds manufacturer), to a Chartist meeting in London, and although many noble sentiments were broached, I found it to be little more than a drinking-club.

The above allusion to "Dr. Johnson's Tavern," reminds me of another appliance made use of to draw the multitude into the vortex. I refer to the getting up of standing concerts, embracing the choicest vocal and instrumental music, which are given free of charge, to draw in drinking customers. The performances at "Dr. Johnson's Tavern" particularly, are said to be of surpassing excellence; those who attend are expected to indemnify the proprietor by the liberal patronage they bestow upon the bar. From regard to the Doctor, I visited the establishment in the daytime, and found it to be richly furnished, and adorned with marble statues.

Some of these establishments employ from twelve to twenty musical performers, on salaries varying from two to nine or ten dollars a week, and among them are pianists, violinists, &c. &c. At Liverpool, and indeed in all the large towns they are common. Many establishments have dramatic performances too, of the most licentious character, connected with these concerts. I was told of a concern in Liverpool, which had procured an expensive organ to satisfy Sunday customers, who may be a little piously inclined, and

who meet, listen to the solemn tones of the organ, sing sacred hymns, drink beer and smoke, until they get worked up to a pretty high key.

There is another initiatory institution to be met with in the large towns, from which the most spotless innocence cannot emerge without harm. It embraces a collection of wax figures, representing the most noted criminals in the act of committing the crimes of which they were convicted. Connected with it is an apartment called "the chamber of horrors," into which admission is gained for a higher fee, and where various horrid things in reference to the perpetration of the crimes are shown and commented on in a strain of most revolting detail, and thus the mind familiarizes itself with ideas of suicide, murder, and pollution.

A few years ago a play, of which murder and romance were the staple, was performed in the theatres of this country, and so popular was it that its repetition was called for in various parts of the kingdom; but so frequent did murders of the same romantic character become, evidently from its influence, that it was suppressed by the public authorities, when they at once became much less frequent.

A beer drinker is always a smoker, and a smoker is always a beer drinker. Most of the hotels have what they call "the smoking room," with the tables always replenished with piles of clay pipes, with stems two feet long, ready for use. We have been taunted as a people with being greatly defiled by the use of the weed, and a sneer has been raised against us on account of the filthy vulgarity of a few. I am not their apologizer; I would not lift a finger to save their

backs from the scourge; but I must say, that these flings come with an ill grace from a people who will puff a cloud of tobacco smoke right in your face, without seeming to feel guilty of the slightest impropriety. The Turk will not do that, as I can testify from experience, but I have yet to meet the first Englishman who has hesitated to do it, when allowed by higher authority. Whether it is from the fact, that smoking is so universal a thing, that they do not dream that it can be offensive to any one, or from what cause their ill manners arise in this respect, I am not able to say.

But smoking is universal among the people, and it is a burdensome luxury to the poor beer-drinking laborer, for tobacco costs three times as much here as with us. I have been importuned by beggars in the street for money to buy tobacco, and also beer. The poor souls would make up a most dismal face, and say they had not had a pipe of tobacco, or a glass of beer that day.

And now, in view of the portraiture I have drawn of the working classes generally, and of the portraiture I have heretofore drawn of the character and habits of the agricultural laborers as a class, are we not prepared to read understandingly the following brief quotation from a leader in the London Times. Says that spokesman of the conscience of the world, as it claims to be, "We fear, that whatever may be their merits, a considerable abatement must be made in any estimate which may be formed of the national character, in consideration of a very *considerable* quantity of *brutality*."

Well said, Mr. Times, that will do. But surely that must be a mere slip of the pen. The admission, that

the laboring classes are to be taken into the account, in forming an estimate of the national character, is certainly a new idea, and, if gravely entertained, furnishes food for reflection, inasmuch as but a small portion of the population have been allowed to form an element in estimates of the kind heretofore. Surely, the "*brutal*" part of the population must consider themselves rising in the market. But will not the national character, by such an infusion of brutality (three parts to one), suffer a corresponding depreciation?

And where does the responsibility of all this brutality rest? With whom, and upon whose heads, if not upon those to whom these lowly ones look up, "as to a superior order of beings," the influence of whose example, in combination with the depressing power of caste and the robbery of their earnings, has made them what they are?

And what a contrast to all this does our own country present! Our seaports must ever be exposed to inundations from the same source, to a greater or less extent, but in the mass of our population there is only contrast.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE PERFECTION OF THE POLICE SYSTEM, AN INDEX TO THE MORAL CHARACTER OF THE PEOPLE.

I HAD as a fellow passenger across the Atlantic, an English gentleman who had a great deal to say about the law and order which prevail in England, and about its admirable system of police, with some pretty broad hints that all this showed well for the moral character of the people.

The thought arose in my mind, however, that laws are for the lawless, and that morality is by no means the kind of soil for a rigid police system to spring out of. And thus I kept turning the subject over occasionally in my mind, and upon my arrival, I set myself to investigating the matter, and found that the police system of England was all that my friend had represented it to be, and far more perfect in its mechanism than I had conceived it possible. And this awakened my suspicions still more in reference to the character of the moral elements which lay beneath this placid exterior, and out of which that system had grown to such a state of perfection.

With these unpleasant reflections forced upon me, I unfortunately blundered upon a case of lynch law, executed in

fine style, within a short time after my arrival. As I was passing along the street adjacent to the river, a rather out of the way place, I noticed a well dressed man who had a bit of rope in his hand, with a knot in the end, which he commenced applying without mercy to a young man in his shirt sleeves, a lad of some sixteen, and evidently of the mud-hovel order, who writhed and screamed most piteously under the infliction, while two or three others were aiding and abetting in the operation. Taking pity on the poor fellow, I stepped up to the man who had him in hand, and told him to desist, or I would have the police down upon him. In an instant he ceased applying the rope, and turning around in alarm, apologized by saying, that the boy had been very troublesome about his premises, and there seemed to be no other way to manage him. I told him that was a very poor way, and at the same time I gave the boy liberty to go home, and he bounded off in quick time.

Well, this was no impeachment of the averment of my English friend, that this is a land of law and order, and that its police system is the best in the world, but was rather confirmatory, for the man trembled in every nerve at the mention of the police. But, although I was not disposed to make any capital out of the affair, it might fairly enough have been thrown in his face, and in the faces of this whole people, as an offset to their chucklings over American lynch law, coupled with grave prognostications of the downfall of the American Republic. And I may remark in passing, that it would be by no means a difficult task to make it appear, that, with all their law and order, and the most perfect police

system the world has to show, popular outbreaks have been far more frequent and alarming, in this country, than in ours.

But my business just now, is with the police system of England, and to present it to you as the key with which to unlock the moral mysteries of this kingdom, is the task before me. The reader will please to bear in mind, as he goes along, that this system, in connection with the jail, the gallows, and transportation, is a substitute for the education of the people.

As I said, I commenced investigating the character and merits of the system, from the first hour of my arrival, and then, though I had not asked a question, evidences enough of its perfection were obtruded upon my observation at every step. At every corner of the streets were to be seen men dressed in uniform, or passing from corner to corner, each one in his own "beat." It is just so through all the cities of England, and, to my astonishment I learn, through all her rural districts; yes, even through all the farming neighborhoods of the kingdom, policemen are constantly going their rounds.

And yet, all this is only the outside of the matter. There is another body called "The Detectives," who wear no badge, and are known only to the authorities. These have also received the appropriate appellation of "blood hounds of the police," so unerringly do they scent out, and so fiercely do they pursue their prey, and woe to the offender who has them upon his track! To accomplish their ends, they appear in all sorts of disguises, and penetrate every haunt of vice, without suspicion of their object. And when not in

pursuit of their victims, they are employed in making themselves acquainted with suspicious characters, keeping an eye upon them, and collecting such information as may be made available for their purposes.

And both these divisions are drilled to their duties with all the rigor of military discipline. They are not indeed a military body, and Englishmen make their boast, that the people are so orderly and quiet with nothing but an unarmed civil police to restrain them, pointing us with an air of triumph, to the bayoneted police across the channel.

But the difference is more in name than in reality. The police of this country, though they pass for a civil body, are in fact equivalent to a military band. When likely to be overmatched upon any emergency, they spring a rattle with which they are provided, and which brings all the policemen in the neighborhood instantly to the spot, and if all together are insufficient, they are empowered to call the military at once to their aid, so that if they were actually armed as a military body, they could not be a greater "terror to evil doers," than they are as now constituted.

Great precaution is used in selecting the men, candidates for the office of policeman being required to present themselves with a "five years' character" in their pockets.

And how could any thing be more admirably contrived! As a system adapted to the emergency, it exhibits a symmetry and perfection of parts, worthy of the great mind that conceived it. And what an unerring index have we here to the moral condition of this people!

The system originated some fifteen years ago, or more,

under the auspices of Sir Robert Peel, and *originated in necessity*. The system previously in operation, was far more rigid than any thing to be found in our American cities, but crime ran riot notwithstanding, and had run riot for centuries. Says one of their most distinguished modern writers, "In the early part of the last century, it was no uncommon thing for persons to be knocked down and robbed at noonday, in the public thoroughfares of London, while the roads in every direction were infested by robbers on foot and on horseback." And in reference to a later day, he adds, "The author has been told by persons now living, that in repairing to their houses in the neighborhood of London, after business hours, it was the practice of business men to meet at some place of rendezvous, and proceed homeward in a body, for mutual protection." He also speaks of a London physician, who said that he was often necessitated to shoot down men who beset his carriage at night as he was proceeding to visit his patients.

And from the same high authority it appears, that lynch law was in full vogue up to that time, which must have been about the close of the last century, or the beginning of the present. "Many offences," he says, "were summarily dealt with by the populace. The pickpocket, for example, who should be detected in the commission of his offence, was dragged by the mob to the nearest pump, half drowned, and then permitted to depart." And he adds, "the chief means of suppression have been our *improved system of police*." [See Porter's Progress of the Nation, Vol. 3, page 176.]

Here, then, we have it from the highest authority of which England can boast, that her admirable police system is the natural-born offspring of the low moral condition and lawless character of the mass of the people, and that, but for the restraints it imposes, order would give place to confusion, and the voice of authority be drowned in the screamings of anarchy.

That is just what I suspected from the moment my English friend directed my attention to the subject; for I could not conceive what other cause could have operated to bring such a system into being. So far from being a fit subject for national boasting, or national self-complacency, this system stands as a monument to humble the national pride. Far distant be the day when the rural districts of my country shall reach that point of moral degradation which shall make it necessary to rear a monument like this to her shame!

With such a system in operation, subjecting every man, woman, and child to a constant watch, it would be strange indeed if their records of crime did not compare favorably with those of our own cities. But this furnishes no clue to the actual state of morals. What the records of crime would show if the system were not in force, is made to appear in the above extract. It is to be hoped that our cities, exposed as they are to a constant influx of thieves and robbers from the Old World, will adopt the same rigid system.

And what sort of a sight would that be, to see a vast army of police spread all over our farming districts, each performing his circuit on horseback, incessantly from day to day, to see—what? Nothing but honest toil quietly pur-

suing its labors, and looking up amazed at the passing spectacle.

What necessity there is for a police at all with us, is confined to our cities, whose aggregate population, according to the last census, is only about four millions, while the rural population of our country is some eighteen or nineteen millions. But here the case is far otherwise. The greater portion of the population of the kingdom is crowded into cities and large towns; but the marvel is, that in these cities and large towns there is no more necessity for stringent police regulations than in the rural districts. This is the greatest marvel of all, and shows, to my mind, a fundamental error, both in the structure and the administration of this government—an error upon which I design to expend some attention as I go along.

The expense of sustaining this gigantic system is immense, and in addition to the crushing burdens which previously bowed down the necks of the people, must be severely felt; and yet it is cheerfully submitted to by all classes of the people, for the sake of the security it affords.

I will here remark, to the credit of this people, that the laws are executed with a good deal of impartiality, upon the high as well as the low, for outbreaking crimes. Just as I arrived in England, a sprig of nobility, son of Lord B., (a captain in the army,) was sentenced to the tread-mill for ten days for striking a police officer when in the discharge of his duty. This, of course, clothes the system with terror and gives it efficiency.

CHAPTER XIX.

ANOTHER TEST OF CHARACTER.

I HAVE shown in the chapter on the police system of England, how liable a stranger here is to be misled by *appearances* in reference to the moral character of the people; and how the clock-work governmental machinery to which I was pointed in triumph, as an incontestable evidence of a high moral tone in the community, rightly interpreted, proves the very reverse, and sets a bad mark upon the very forehead of the nation.

There are other appearances here which are equally calculated to mislead. For instance, at first sight, what can be better calculated to give one a favorable impression in reference to the general moral character of the people, than the universal practice of requiring all persons seeking employment to present themselves with a due array of testimonials?

To this practice I was also pointed in testimony of the general good character of the people, and, without reflection, I was disposed to accord to it all the weight which was claimed for it. That an applicant for ordinary service must

present himself or herself with a "character," and the candidate for the office of policeman, with "*a five years' character*" in hand, as the first essential preliminary, and that strangers from abroad must come with a great show of "*character*," *seemed* to indicate a high degree of moral purity here, and a public sensibility which recoiled from the approaches of immorality.

And it is calculated to help this idea mightily, to observe "characters" flaring from the sign-boards of the tradesmen in the large towns. "*Established twenty-five years*," or "*thirty years*," or "*forty years*," as the case may be, is frequently the testimonial of character inscribed over the shop-door; and in one instance, I observed *an "eighty years'" character* upon a sign, which was itself well on in years.

All this *seems* to show a most scrupulous regard to *character*, and with those who are content with *appearances* passes current for the *reality* itself. I confess that the first impression made upon me by these appearances was a delusion I loved to cherish.

It would be a very pleasant task to record these things as an evidence of general good character, but unfortunately common sense steps in here with her verdict. "How is it," she asks, "that all this precaution and particularity are necessary, if there be not a superabundance of rogues in the country? Does not all this parade about character show upon the face of it, that it is scarce?"

The necessity of this regard to character was signally tested during the late world's exhibition in London. At that time, there were said to be over twenty thousand night and

day omnibus and cab drivers, and notwithstanding all the stringency of the laws, and all the vigilance of a police, as perfect as I have described it, so numerous and flagrant were the impositions and abuses they perpetrated upon passengers, that resort was had to special legislation, and a law was passed, forbidding the proprietors of these vehicles to employ any driver who could not bring a certificate of good character from at least *two responsible persons*, instead of one as previously required, and forbidding the owners to drive their own cabs, without complying with the same requisition. And what was marvellous to me, the editor of the Times, in commending this salutary provision for the public safety, stigmatizes these tens of thousands of drivers as "a *set of desperadoes*, with very limited exceptions." And yet they were probably as good as the generality of the class from which they were taken; nay, better, for they were picked men, each having been required to present himself with *one respectable endorser!*

The same testimony in regard to the desperate character of these drivers, is borne by the Great Western Railway Co. Such were the villanies they practised upon passengers, that that Company found it necessary to pass a by-law, providing for a selection of a hundred and fifty of the best of them, who alone were allowed to take passengers from their London station.

My fellow passenger across the Atlantic, who commended so highly the police system of England as indicating a high tone of morals in the country, also said to me, that I need not stand in much fear from humbugs, for they did not

abound here as in the United States—that, as a general thing, I might depend on what was said to me, with little danger of imposition. And accordingly, partly from the lessons I thus received, and partly from a desire to avoid the stigma of meanness from an honorable people, I resolved to act upon the principle, that a high moral standard prevails here, concluding, in my own mind, that it would be better to be bitten a *little* occasionally, than to harbor a general distrust. Unfortunately, however, almost every thing went wrong with me in the experiment, and I was reluctantly compelled, in self-defence, to adopt a more wary system of action.

But not to obtrude the results of my own sad experience, I will rest the case with their own testimony. And first, I will adduce that of my highly esteemed friend, H. R., Esq., a heavy partner in one of the largest manufactories in the kingdom. As a matter of necessary precaution, he advised me, in traversing the kingdom, never to stop at a hotel for the night, without first settling upon the terms, assuring me that it was his invariable practice to do it, and that otherwise he would be subject to great extortion. And how does this compare with the standard of hotel morality in our own country? Why, our hotel-keepers would take it as an insult to be thus catechised, and how seldom do we hear of a case of extortion from this quarter, by transcending the ordinary rates of charging?

Again, upon my remarking to him, that he must have realized an enormous amount as the aggregate profit upon so large a business, prosecuted for such a length of time, he

replied, that he should have done so, but for the fact, that in the course of thirty years' business, his losses had amounted to quite as much as all he had saved. His sales had been mostly to the London merchants, and dealers in other parts of the kingdom, and his losses had been from failing firms, who made a dishonest shift of their property to swindle their creditors. I must not omit to say, however, that he was subjected to a loss of £2000 sterling ($10,000), from a swindling firm in our own country, at Richmond, Virginia.

I said to him, that, as they imprisoned for debt here, I should suppose the terrors thus suspended over fraudulent debtors, would operate, to a great extent, as a safeguard; to which he replied, that if a man was disposed to be dishonest, he had little to fear from that source, as the creditor was not very apt to subject himself to the certain additional loss accruing to him from such a resort.

Another manufacturer with whom I conversed, made very nearly the same remarks in reference to the amount of his losses, the dishonest shifts of his customers, and the difficulty of recovering from fraudulent debtors.

And have they no Swartwouts of their own here? Why, there is a fellow now living at Bordeaux, almost in sight of England, who ran away with an immense sum of public money while an officer of the government, and is now luxuriating at his ease, in a style of princely magnificence, and setting the British lion at defiance.

And no bank swindling? Considerably on this side the beginning of the present century, there sprang up a system of banking here, which, for legislative folly, and the reckless

knavery to which it gave rise, with all our banking folly and banking villany, never had a parallel in our country. By the provisions of a general law, not only were private companies allowed to establish banks to any extent without being held to any adequate responsibilities, but manufacturers and business men generally, were authorized to issue paper (shinplasters) to any amount, on their own individual responsibility, with which they paid off the workmen in their employ. Under this system, matters went on swimmingly for a time, but about the year 1825, the reaction came, and these private banks, and individual bankers, were all swept by the board, and little or nothing was to be found to redeem their worthless paper, much of it being in the hands of poor laboring men, who were thus reduced to extreme destitution and want, while multitudes of tradesmen and others were broken up and ruined.

And when did ever a parallel to the following occur in our country? At the time the railroad mania was at its height in this country, there rose up a man here by the name of Hudson, who managed to get the charge of all the principal roads in the kingdom, and by fraudulent entries, was enabled to make low purchases and high sales of stock, until he came to be considered the wealthiest man in the kingdom, and was honored with the title of "railroad king." As a consequence, he walked right into the first society in England, and the proudest peers of the realm were seen hanging upon his arm. But the day of reckoning came, his frauds were discovered, and he was kicked out of the paradise which he had thus created for himself, his kickers themselves becoma laughing-stock by the operation.

Says the London Despatch of that monster which rules the money world, the London Stock Exchange: "Our Stock Exchange is a great assembly of rogues, to job honest folks out of their money, to sell stock they do not possess, and cannot deliver, to decry and cry up shares as suits their book."

But nothing shows a deeper moral obliquity than the public perversion of funds bequeathed for the education of the poor. It were enough, one would think, to raise a blush upon this people, that the masses have been suffered to remain in ignorance, without any attempt to establish a system of national education. But how should that blush of shame deepen into crimson, in view of the monstrous perversion of funds left by private bequests for this purpose?

In the city of London alone there are funds, the interest upon which, I am told, amounts to ten millions of dollars annually—a sum sufficient to extend the facilities of education to every child in that vast metropolis, and yet this immense sum is squandered annually upon consequential idlers, and the myriads of children, for whose benefit it was designed, are left to grow up in ignorance and vice, candidates for transportation to a convict land. It is enough to make the very pavements of the streets cry, shame! shame!

In this same London, there is a most magnificent structure, covering acres of ground, right in the heart of the city, which was founded by the sixth Edward, and richly endowed, for the education of the poor. In that institution, are boarded, clothed, and taught, free, one thousand young men, all sons of the wealthy, and not a poor man's child can gain admittance. A similar institution, equally extensive,

founded and endowed by the same Edward, for the same purpose, and perverted in the same manner, is to be found at Birmingham, another at Winchester, another at Westminster, and others still, I believe, in other large towns.

I tried to ascertain how it was possible that these monstrous perversions could thus transpire in a country of law; and I received this explanation, that the managers had always been the millionaires, of the kingdom, and that they made it a point so to fix the conditions of admission, that no poor man could comply with them—conditions relating to circumstantials which were left discretionary with them.

Thus has justice been outraged, and barefaced robbery been perpetrated by insolent wealth upon the helpless poor, from generation to generation. It was not enough that they had been left in brutal ignorance by the government; it was not enough that their hard earnings had gone to swell the coffers, and minister to the voluptuousness of their lordly masters, the offerings of the sleeping dead must be snatched from the very altar on which they had been consecrated to the instruction of the poor, and sacrilegiously devoted to the strengthening of the hands of their oppressors.

These things are not done in a corner, nor is there any attempt to conceal them. They are admitted and talked about freely in London and elsewhere, and nobody denies the facts, or dreams that there is any help for them.

What wonder is it then that, abandoned to brutal ignorance, such multitudes should grow up in heathenism, under the very eaves of the sanctuary? What wonder that out of a population of two and a half millions in this metropolis of

the world, only two hundred thousand, less than a twelfth part, pass the threshold of a Christian Church on the Sabbath? What wonder that a system of police should be called into requisition, so perfect that every man, woman and child, are kept constantly under its eye?

Not far from the institution above mentioned, is an immense hospital, covering some acres of ground, established and endowed long since, by the bequest of a wealthy individual, at his decease, for the benefit of unfortunate tradesmen, designed as a refuge for them in distress. But its funds are nearly all squandered upon officials, some of whom receive ten thousand dollars a year, while its doors are closed against the needy applicants for which it was intended, or opened only to bestow some paltry pittance, which will afford no substantial relief.

Is it matter of surprise then that there should be all this particularity about character—that there should be a total want of confidence between man and man, where there is not a long-established reputation?

I have sometimes been half-inclined to exonerate the higher orders here from the charge of exclusiveness on account of rank, especially so far as foreigners are concerned, and to attribute their shyness to strangers to this cause. Indeed I have no doubt that lack of confidence, based on their experience with their own countrymen, and their knowledge of themselves, operates largely in the matter, though probably only as an auxiliary to their hereditary exclusiveness.

These things certainly do not afford much ground for national congratulation.

CHAPTER XX.

THE COAL DISTRICT—EXTRAORDINARY MONOPOLY AND EXTORTION.

THE modernized cities of Newcastle-upon-Tyne, and of Sunderland, at the mouth of the Wear, the former with 150,000, and the latter with 100,000 inhabitants, have risen up under the auspices of the coal and fishing trades, principally the former. All this portion of the kingdom seems to be one vast coal-field, insomuch that in traversing a district embracing several counties, the smoke of the pits is every where visible, and in some localities, it occasions a haziness in the atmosphere which fairly obstructs the vision.

Nearly all the coal which makes its way coastwise to London and other home markets, or is exported to foreign countries, is the product of these pits, and finds its outlets by the Tyne, the Wear, and the Tees, all within a distance of forty miles upon the coast.

Under the auspices of this trade too, there has risen up and flourished, for three quarters of a century, the most extraordinary monopoly, involving the most extended and remorseless system of oppression, which probably ever existed in any civilized country on the globe.

This has been accomplished through what is called "*The limitation of the vend*," which consists of a permanent organization among the owners of the pits throughout this extended region, by which the price of all the coal shipped at these ports coastwise to London and other domestic markets, has been vastly increased to the consumers. A committee, or Board of Trade, meet regularly once a fortnight at Newcastle, to fix the prices for the next fortnight, of coal to be shipped from the three ports above named, and also to prescribe the quantity allowed to be shipped in that time, making it more or less, according as the supply in London is greater or smaller, taking care that it never becomes a drug there. And some conception may be formed of the extent of the monopoly, and of the amount of extortionary proceeds, from the fact that, in 1836, there were 8,162 ships engaged in conveying coal from these ports to London alone.

This arrangement had no reference to coal exported to foreign countries, (on account, I suppose, of competition from other sources against which they were protected at home,) and, as a consequence, at one time, coal could be bought in St. Petersburgh for about half its price in London. This, however, was not the exact measure of the extortion, as there was at that time a domestic duty upon coal here of some 25 per cent., while it was duty free at the Russian port.

There is another circumstance which shows up this matter in a still more revolting light. When new pits were to be opened any where within the limits of this vast area, for the establishment of an additional colliery, a committee was

appointed to visit it, and fix the proportionate quantity of coal it should be allowed to furnish during each fortnight, as a partner in the general concern, that quantity to be determined by the extent of the coal-field purchased, the number and size of the pits, and the number of cottages erected for workmen.

Very well, the new aspirants for a share in the monopoly have taken the precaution to secure four or five times as large a coal-field as they intend to occupy, to sink twice as many pits as they intend to work, and to erect double the number of cottages they will ever have occasion for, and upon this "*basis*" they get their apportionment irrevocably fixed; and then, of the four or five, or half a dozen acres they had purchased, they never occupy more than one or two, nor work more than half the number of pits they have sunk, nor occupy with workmen more than half the cottages they have erected.

And yet, with all this outlay of capital to lie idle, such is the enormous profit by this arrangement, on the small quantity of coal raised, as to justify it, although that quantity has not been more than one-fourth what the pits were capable of producing. Three-quarters of a million of dollars have often been thus expended upon collieries, where one-fourth the amount would have been amply sufficient to make preparations, and raise all the coal allowed to be shipped, and yet with a vast profit.

And this extraordinary game has been played for seventy-five years; many of the operators have been made *million-*

naires, while hundreds of thousands of poor famished beings were taxed with the extortion, and had to foot the bill, and after all, could only procure a very partial supply of fuel, being subjected to great suffering as the consequence.

And it is by no means matter of wonder, that those who could thus take advantage of suffering humanity, should be disposed to overreach and defraud each other, in the manner above described.

I believe, however, the numerous railroad facilities for transporting coal to London, and other domestic markets, have of late had the effect to render this gigantic monopoly comparatively inoperative, and the consumer is in a measure delivered from the burdens it had so long imposed for its own aggrandizement.

And what is most extraordinary, the government, to secure the London market, as far as possible, from imposition, passed an act as far back as the reign of Queen Ann, requiring the price paid by the shippers of each cargo, at the above ports, to be recorded in the public register, immediately on its arrival in London, and, in 1831, abolished the coal duty altogether; and yet this game was still kept up behind the scene, subjecting the people to this unheard of extortion, and nobody seemed to know any thing about it, until recent disclosures brought it to light.

And this is but a specimen of the dark labyrinths in which business men here, with capital at their command, are very apt to involve all their proceedings, to monopolize, to overreach, and to oppress. I could give illustrations enough,

to the same import, but I have not done with these coal mines.

Only a part of the gains of this vast army of extortioners came from the above source, the rest being wrung from the earnings of the hundreds of thousands of poor wretches, who, for the greater part of their lives, are kept buried in the bowels of the earth, some of them to the depth of *eighteen hundred feet* below the surface, only occasionally emerging into the light of day, to spend a few delirious hours in drunken carousal, and then slinking away to burrow like wild beasts in the earth. And they are as much secluded from the light of civilization and christianity, as from the genial light of day. Nay, they have a substitute for the latter, in the dim twilight of the lamp; but in respect to the former, they are in as utter darkness as the savage in the wilderness, most of them having never entered a church or a schoolhouse in their lives. And those who are heaping up fortunes from their earnings, not only do nothing to improve their condition, but congratulate themselves that they have such swarms of human beings at their command, who are degraded enough to be content with such a life. According to the authority I have quoted, there are nearly a million of human beings in the kingdom in this condition, and they *husbands and fathers*, to a great extent.

And their lives; what are they considered worth? Mines are continually blowing up and sending them into eternity, the safety lamp notwithstanding. Only the other day, fifty of them were destroyed by a single explosion, near New Castle, and every few days, explosions attended with fearful

loss of life, are chronicled in the papers, serving no other purpose than to amuse news-gossipers.*

* Since the above was written, the government, in view of the alarming frequency of explosions, has appointed three inspectors, whose duty it is to go the rounds, examine the mines, and order such precautionary measures as they may think best.

CHAPTER XXI.

THE LONDON BARRISTERS—THE TALE OF OPPRESSION CONTINUED.

No class of men overtops the London barristers, not even the nobility. Until lately, they had every thing their own way, and the cry of their victims filled the land.

A poor man informed me, that to get the papers made out for the lease-hold of only four acres of land, on which he wished to commence a nursery, after suffering a long delay, he was saddled with a bill of cost to the tune of £80 sterling, ($400,) and had it to pay. And it is no uncommon thing for suits involving many thousands of pounds, to be kept along from one court to another, year after year, until the entire amount is absorbed in costs, and the poor client comes out penniless.

A great blow, however, has been struck at these enormities by the recent passage of a law reform bill, which is to the barristers what the corn law repeal bill is to the landlords; and both unite in the loud wail of complaint. The reform consists in transferring a large proportion of the cases which came under the jurisdiction of the Westminster Hall Courts, where the barristers alone are allowed to practice, to

the County Courts, from which they are excluded, and where the expense of a suit is but trifling in comparison.

Previously to this, the Westminster Hall Courts took cognizance of all important suits throughout the kingdom, and there was no law to restrain the barristers from the most exorbitant charges. As a consequence, they have, in process of time, grown into the wealthiest and most arrogant aristocracy in the kingdom. Springing originally from aristocratic families, and having these advantages, there have been no bounds to the wealth many of them have accumulated at the expense of their suffering clients, and the pitch of exclusiveness and insolence to which they have attained.

Some idea may be formed of their opportunities for extortion, from the fact that no application can be made to parliament for corporate privileges, as railroad charters, &c., without the employment of barristers on both sides, who charge thousands of pounds, at their own discretion; and that is only among the incidentals.

The barrister never sees his clients. His nice carpets are never soiled by their vulgar footsteps, nor do they ever feel the warm grip of his hand, or hear his oily words. That low work is left to his attorney, who is an underling to look to the testimony, &c., while *he* manages the suit, appearing in court, &c.

The barristers, with their attornies, are settled by themselves, or rather, in three different localities, occupying a considerable space in the very heart of London, christened respectively, Lincoln's Inn, Gray's Inn, and Temple Inn.

The barristers are very devout, and have a church all to

themselves, formerly the "Church of the Holy Sepulchre," occupied, I think, by the Knights of St. John, before the Crusades, but modernized and fitted up by them in a style of elegance which is not surpassed by that of any church in Europe. No Oratorio can surpass its music.

Whether it is to aid their devotion, or for what reason, I know not, the barristers are all seated by themselves at church, their wives and families by themselves, and their attornies and clerks by themselves. Nor is any woman admitted, unless she goes with a barrister.

And now that my hand is in, I can hardly resist the temptation to detail the sublime process of making a barrister. You may laugh, but it is true nevertheless, that all that is required of the candidate, is that he eat a certain number of dinners at the old dining-hall. This is part and parcel of the common law of England, it being taken for granted, that if he has eaten the prescribed number of dinners at the hall, he has gone through with the prescribed course.

I will pause to say something of these dinners. At five o'clock, P.M., certain mysterious-looking personages are seen wending their way to the old dining-hall. But see, they enter first another room opposite, from which, after remaining a little while, they emerge metamorphosed; it is the robe-room, all being required to appear at the dinner-table in flowing robes.

And now they saunter in and throw themselves upon the sofa, awaiting the approach of their superiors. Soon a loud rap is heard at the door; it swings upon its hinges, and in march the *benchers*, passing between the bowing files, who

have risen spontaneously to their feet to receive them, and proceeding to seat themselves at their own aristocratic tables apart.

All being seated, another loud rap summons them to silence, and grace is said, when all with one accord make onset upon the loaded tables, there being four at a table, which makes a mess. Dinner ended, and champagne dispatched, they march out in the same order in which they entered, and with the same demonstrations.

Having swallowed the requisite number of dinners, the candidate (who I believe is an attorney) is next to be initiated, to which end a wig costing five guineas, and a gown costing three, are indispensable. A notification of the intention of the party to become a barrister, is posted in the hall, and objections, friends, and guests are invited. At the sound of the well-known rap, the *benchers* are ushered in, and being seated in awful dignity, in wigs, gowns, &c., proceed to administer the oaths of abjuration and supremacy, and the oath of allegiance to the trembling candidate, which, being finished, make him a full-fledged barrister, in full communion with the most aristocratic body of men on the earth, and entitled to all the privileges, emoluments, immunities, and honors of the order.

And then follows a rare scene at the festive board. At first they sit in grave dignity, and little is said; but soon pop, pop, pop goes the champagne, and now all is life and animation. Toasts, witticisms, puns, flash from every lip, each in its turn eagerly. Another foaming bumper, another, and another are lifted, toasts multiply, wit sparkles;

and of the four who sit around one table, instead of one talker and three listeners, as at first, every one is a talker with no listeners, each endeavoring to raise his voice above those of all three of his companions in vain; and so at all the tables in the spacious hall, the whole constituting a scene of rare confusion and uproar.

For the above particulars I am mainly indebted to an esteemed friend, who has been initiated into the secrets of the order.

Of the swarms of this class, some conception may be formed from a statement made recently in the papers, that three thousand barristers, and as many of their attornies, had returned to London (in September) from their month's annual pastime among the moors of the North, to which moors all the nobility and gentry in the kingdom repair annually in flocks, to spend three or four weeks in shooting grouse.

All the Lord Chancellors, Judges of the King's Bench, &c., are taken from among them, so that in fact they override every other class in the kingdom.

CHAPTER XXII.

STILL ANOTHER WHEEL IN THE SOCIAL MACHINE.

THERE is a class of men who play an important part in the mechanism of society here, of whom little is known in our country.

This class consists of those who have risen to great wealth in private business, as bankers, brokers, shippers, wholesale dealers, &c., the men who, in fact, possess more capital than any other class in England, far more indeed than the landed aristocracy.

There are some very remarkable traits of character pertaining to this class of persons. Although wealthier than the landed aristocracy, they make not the slightest show, but seem to avoid it as much as possible. And why? The titled aristocrats are all show, and do nothing but spend money, and why, *upon the principle of imitation*, do not these men follow the example of those they reverence so much, when they are so abundantly able, and when it would be so natural, one would think, for them to do it?

The only, and the true reply to this question is, that they *dare* not. The cry of, *parvenu!* (*upstart!*) would be raised against them at once, and that would blast for ever

the secret hopes they entertain, that by carrying themselves lowly, they will eventually, by reason of their immense wealth, be able, as I have said in another place, "to wriggle as joints in the tail of the aristocracy."

That is the paradise on which all their hopes centre, and for which they sacrifice what to them would otherwise be the sum total of life's enjoyments; and, after all, they generally go down to their graves without reaching the prize—so omnipotent is the power of titled show upon these islands.

Another prominent characteristic of these men is, that with all their self-denial and humility of deportment lordward, they are to the rest of mankind the stiffest and most exclusive set in the whole kingdom, not excepting the lords themselves, as though they thought their blood were undergoing a process of purification from the vulgar elements infused into it by popular intercourse, preparatory to taking their places among a higher order of beings. And thus while these individuals are cut off from all substantial intercourse with the beings among whom they so much covet a place, they cut themselves off, for the most part, from the rest of the world, and drag out a pitiful existence of fruitless struggle, to be crowned in the end, most likely, with disappointed hope.

And they leave the same cup of bitterness for their children, separating them entirely from those around them, and educating them solely with the hope at least that they will be admitted into the Elysium, though themselves have been thrust out; and this cup their children have to drink

to the dregs. Occasionally one succeeds at last; but so forlorn is the hope, that it is astonishing it can have such power over them. Theirs is a wonderful faith—if the Christian's heaven, which is far more accessible, had half the power over him, it were well with him.

I will now give an illustration of the exclusiveness of this class of persons, which has fallen under my own observation. Being in a certain city, I took the notion to stroll out two or three miles to the seat of one of this class of characters; and having got there, I had just mischief enough in me to try an experiment upon him. I turned in at the gate which led to his mansion, and meeting a person whom I took to be him, I inquired if he was the man, calling him by name, to which he replied dryly, that he was, at the same time putting on a forbidding aspect, and turning a little to one side. I introduced myself as civilly as I could, saying to him that I was an American, had come out for a walk, and wished a few moments' conversation with him on one or two particular subjects, if it would not be deemed obtrusive—upon which he stepped right away from me, and passing through a gate, strained his eyes at me, and said, "Have you got a letter?" still "sheering off," as though he thought either his purse or his dignity were in danger. I told him I had no letter, and that I was not in the habit of troubling myself with letters unless I called on persons of consequence, and that was the last I saw of Mr. *Sheepshanks*.

No class of persons in the kingdom are so haughty, cruel, and overbearing to their dependants as this very class. Com-

mercial agents in their employ abroad, have spoken to me of the savage treatment they sometimes receive from them; and their hearts are said to be steeled against the most touching appeals of humanity, and their ears deaf to its most moving cry of distress.

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE NATIONAL DEBT—GOVERNMENT TRICKS AND JOCKEYING —THE ARTS OF DIPLOMACY CHARACTERIZING EQUALLY THE GOVERNMENT, BUSINESS FIRMS, AND INDIVIDUALS.

THE deep-laid and crooked financial schemes to which this government has had to resort from time to time to *keep up* its dignity, and *keep down* the people, are worthy a passing notice.

And the question here meets us at the outset, How is it possible that any government should be able to contrive ways and means to get trusted to the enormous sum of $4,425,931,615, the amount of the British national debt, in the way of a fair and honorable business transaction? How is it possible that a government already hundreds of millions in debt, as this government was at the beginning of "the French war," in 1793, should, without any thing at command to pay what it already owed, be able to avail itself of *honest* expedients to increase that debt thousands of millions more during the fifteen years' continuance of those wars? This, as one of the wonders of the age, is deserving attention.

It is true, that the character of the debt was such that

only the interest could be called for, most of it for ever, another portion for life, and another still for a term of years. And as long as money was a drug, and the government had a reasonable prospect of paying the interest, it might be supposed that lenders would be found. But there must be a limit to the prospective ability of the government to pay even the interest; and who is so reckless of his money as to run that limit up to the sum of $160,000,000, which was the amount of annual interest upon the national debt at its highest point?

And how is this grand anomaly in the financial annals of the world, to be accounted for? How was it possible to induce the people, in a fair and open-handed way, to loan money to the government to such an extent, that even the interest on it could not be paid without increasing the burdens of taxation so as to endanger the existence of the government itself?

Impossible!—it could not be done as an open daylight transaction; and to accomplish it, the following game of deception, dignified as *a master-stroke of state policy*, had to be played off upon the people, *at their own cost.*

In the early stages of the affair, the loans were multiplied far beyond the wants of the government, with a view to convert the surplus into a *Sinking Fund*, that is, a fund whose avails should be applied to the extinguishment of the public debt, the idea being held out to the people, that the means of finally liquidating all the debts of the government had thus been provided, when, in fact, this was a *ruse* which only aggravated the evil.

The surplus loans appropriated to this object, and to be redeemed in fourteen years, amounted to $1,129,000,000, and this sinking fund stock was created as follows: for £57, 7s, 6d. of money loaned to the government, £100 of stock bearing three per cent. interest was given, (that is, for the eight years following 1801,) and the average market value of the £100 of stock, was £61, 17s, 6d., so that the government actually had to lose four and a half pounds sterling on every £100 of stock it had issued, in redeeming it, that is, there was so much loss on every £57, 7s. 6d., which had been borrowed to create the fund, insomuch, that the entire loss entailed upon the government by this sham operation, during twenty-one years from 1793, amounted to $33,194,155. [See Porter's Progress of the Nation, Vol. 2, page 193.)

"By reason of this juggle," adds that author, "the government is now actually burdened with an additional eleven millions of public debt in outstanding stock, which need otherwise have had no existence."

And yet this fraudulent and losing game has been gravely defended as a master-piece of financial wisdom. Great reasons of state, overriding all considerations of morality, have been alleged in justification of a transaction which would condemn a private individual to a convict cell, as a felon. Great reasons of state made it necessary to lay this burden upon the people, to create a humbug to deceive themselves with, and we are coolly told how like a charm it operated, to quiet apprehension, and move the people to come forward with their loans, until the indebtedness of the government figured up to the above enormous amount.

Another great reason of state alleged in behalf of this governmental duplicity and fraud, was, that the confidence it would inspire in reference to the financial resources of the government, and its ability to finally work out the extinguishment of the public debt, would have the effect to reconcile the people to the additional burdens of taxation which must follow in the train, and which they would thus be led to look upon as a matter only of *temporary* necessity.

But the trickery of the government did not end here. After the close of the long continental wars, which ended in the final overthrow of Napoleon, and the peace of Amiens had given tranquillity to Europe, the government was left to reflect at its leisure upon the horrors of its financial condition, which were scarcely less terrific than the arms of Napoleon.

The loans had been effected at a high rate of interest, to meet the exigencies of the government, and the great point to be gained, "by hook or by crook," was to reduce this high rate of interest, so as to bring its annual payment within the competency of the government, with the appliances it had at command.

The creditors of the government, (most of them perpetual,) numbering 284,127 British subjects, could not demand the payment of the principal, nor did they wish to, as they were realizing a high rate of interest, and the government stock in their hands was transferable like bank or railroad stock, and was in demand, owing to the additional security to government paper which peace had brought along with it.

But the outstanding paper of the government, though

most of it was eternally uncollectable, was *redeemable*, and might be called in at its own pleasure. The plan was to call it in, and re-issue at a lower rate of interest than was obtained for ordinary paper, as the rate of interest was then high.

In this emergency, recourse was had to the following unscrupulous expedient. Arrangement was entered into by the government with the Bank of England, by which the latter was to flood the country with money at a low rate of interest, with a view to reduce the general rate of interest to the lowest possible ebb, as the standard by which to regulate the interest on the proposed government re-issues. Says one of their best financial writers, (speaking in reference to this subject,) "The directors extended their circulation to the greatest possible extent, by proffering facilities to every class of the community, loaning money on mortgages, deposits of stock, and any security, however unavailable."

By this means, the ordinary rate of interest was reduced very low; the holders of government paper were in ecstasies, (as it rose to a high premium on their hands,) little dreaming that they were thus elevated only to be cast down. But they were soon given to understand, that they must give up their government stock, and take it back at a reduction of one to one and a half per cent., or see it pass into other hands. And by this operation the annual interest was reduced to the amount of $7,500,000.

If the ill effects of this movement had been confined to the holders of government paper, the moral obliquity involved in it, would not have been so great. But it affected

the value of all other kinds of paper, as well as that of the government, and gave rise to a spirit of wild speculation, which scarcely found a parallel in the extravagances of '36, in our own country. Terrible was the reaction which followed; confidence gave way, a run was made upon the banks, and nearly all the banks in city and country were broken up, the Bank of England alone weathering the storm by reversing its policy.

So great was the commercial distress at this fearful crisis, as to draw from Mr. Huskisson the remark, that "the country was within twenty-four hours of a state of barter," and multitudes sank to ruin.

This is a shrewd people. With all our "*Yankee scheming*," they fairly "take the shine out of us." The government is almost necessarily a jockey. Being a manufacturing people, the great business of the government is to find markets for the products of their manufactories, and this it does by driving shrewd bargains with the nations of the earth, agreeing to take one thing from this country, and another from that, in return for the wares it has to sell, and to this end all the wily arts of diplomacy are called into requisition, to overreach and get all the advantage which the most consummate management can secure, and the more since other nations are getting into the way of supplying their own necessities. One great reason of their holding on with such tenacity to their colonies is, that, to the extent of their wants, an exclusive market is thus secured for their manufactured goods.

And the same strategic policy runs down through all the

ramifications of private business, each manufacturing company, and each business firm, finding as formidable competition around them, as does the government among the nations. Every company, and every firm of any importance, have agents constantly traversing the kingdom to make sales. Swarms of them are to be met with on all the great thoroughfares of the land, each endeavoring to forestall the other. The shrewdest men in the kingdom are selected for the purpose, and they are generally allowed a guinea a day for expenses, to enable them to make a show of consequence, when they are not worth a penny, and to drink freely with those whose custom they solicit, and thus they generally ruin themselves and beggar their families by the dissipated habits they necessarily acquire in the service of masters who are rising to wealth, at such a fearful cost to themselves.

CHAPTER XXIV.

THE SPELL OF THE PAST.

A DISTINGUISHED British reviewer flings it in our face as an irredeemable literary defect, that we "have nothing to fall back upon in history, no golden age, no venerated traditions, no fabulous antiquity, no fairy land."

And thanks be to heaven that it is so—that we are at an ocean-wide remove from all those influences which come down from the dark centuries of the past, only to mislead and to enslave. Let the nations of the old world quail beneath them; we envy them not, we want no literature imbued with the fell spirit of a semi-barbarous age.

It is a real misfortune to be born under such influences, to have them gathering around us, entwining themselves into our every feeling, and holding us bound, victims to despotism, from our infancy up. Nor do I wonder at their power, for they are adapted, with satanic skill, to the weaknesses of humanity. Shorn of all influence from this source, Juggernaut himself would be powerless for harm.

Illustrations of the power of this influence upon the people of this island are constantly falling under my observation, to some of which I will refer.

At that delightful watering place, Bath, I lingered a few days, being chained to the spot by its rural enchantments. The town (now of 60,000 inhabitants) is a very ancient one, and both fancy and fable have been busy in assigning its origin. According to these authorities, there reigned in Britain, 863 years before the Christian era, a king named Lud who had a son (heir-apparent) who was badly affected with leprosy, and whom in consequence he drove from his presence as unclean, and therefore unfit to belong to the royal family.

Bladud, (for that was the young man's name,) after wandering about from place to place, finally came here and took up his abode. Partaking freely of the mineral waters of the place, he became completely cured of his leprosy, and, returning to his father, was joyfully welcomed. In due time, he ascended the throne, when, from the benefit he had received, he was moved to build a city here.

These people delight in giving credence to this story, and in doing honor to the name of Bladud. They have "Bladud buildings," "Bladud baths," &c., &c. And as I was entering one of these magnificent baths, behold, there stood, perched upon a pedestal, Bladud himself, looking as though he had stood there from the time he made the great discovery. And close by, was this inscription upon a marble slab: "Bladud, son of Lud, Hudibras, who was the eighth king of the Britons, a great philosopher, was the discoverer of these baths, 863 years before Christ, dated A. D. 1699."

And perhaps I ought to acknowledge my own obligations

to Bladud, for I certainly never enjoyed a greater luxury than to swim or float in that honored bath (65 feet by 75), and feel the warm bubbling waters playing like delicate fingers around me,—or in climbing my way to those charming rural retreats, the crescents, perched upon the cliffs, where I was made a child of, and my eyes became "fountains of tears," as a band of music poured its melody upon my ear, and the scene before and below me, embracing the town and valley of the Avon, with its receding acclivities, opened its enchantments upon my vision.

Sabbath came, and as the bells of the city were pouring forth their volumes of sound upon the stillness of the sacred morning, I proceeded on my way to church, "the old Abbey Church," one of those time-honored cathedrals, built by the Catholics, away back in the middle ages, and transferred by the eighth Henry to the Church of England, at the Reformation. Venerable pile! How did the spirit of the past seem to hover around its consecrated walls!

Just before reaching it, a procession of boys, dressed in blue uniform, with military buttons, and knobs upon their caps, passed, on their way to the sanctuary, and following them a procession of girls, also in uniform. They belonged to a Sunday school.

In entering the church, a large unoccupied apartment had to be passed through before reaching the one appropriated to divine worship. In passing this unoccupied apartment, I was fairly startled at seeing what seemed two ghosts, as much as any thing else, stationed, one upon each side, as I passed along. They were two men, tall, slender, and

pale, in black robes, and standing motionless, each with one hand clenched to a tall staff, which might have been mistaken for a spear handle, on which they gently leaned, and both with eyes immovably fixed upon the entrance doorway.

I immediately asked an explanation of this strange phenomenon, and was told that they were awaiting the approach of the high functionaries of the corporation. And soon they made their appearance, in grand procession, all in their quaint official costume, with cocked hats, the Mayor at their head, and the mace-bearer with uplifted *insignia* of authority. They marched up the broad aisle, and seated themselves, in awful dignity, directly in front of the pulpit; during which operation, a feeling of reverential awe seemed to pervade the congregation.

This scene, I confess, came near upsetting all my gravity, and I felt an inclination to levity, which neither the solemnity of the day, nor of the occasion, nor the imposing grandeur of the temple of God, nor a sense of the divine presence even, could fully suppress.

Returning from church, I mentioned the circumstance to a "commercial man" from London, whom I found at my hotel, and said to him, that we had no necessity for any such mummery in my country; to which he replied smartly, "O yes, I know you are all *Tom*, *Dick*, and *Harry* there."

I afterwards learned, that the officers of every paltry town corporation had their official costume and their pageants.

But it was in London that I witnessed the most ridicu-

lous scenes of this character. Right in the heart of the vast metropolis, is a little spot, embracing less than 150,000 inhabitants, which constitutes "*the city of London;*" while the two million and a quarter of inhabitants around it, are *outsiders*, and are formed into separate corporations, so that the Lord Mayor of London we read of, is, in fact, only the lord mayor of this paltry municipality; and yet, he is the personage to whom, as a matter of feudal etiquette, on certain occasions, the occupant of the throne does homage. The city charter was granted away back in feudal times, and the functionaries who hold life-leases of their places under it, still cling to the exclusive privileges it granted, and sturdily refuse to abate one iota from their claim to the fantastic feudal honors which have descended upon them.

At the western limit of this ancient corporation, is an old gate, called "Temple Bar," which I believe is a relic of the wall which once surrounded the town. The Queen's palace, although far within the precincts of the metropolis, is located at a considerable distance from this gate, making her an *outsider*, which she is, I believe, by the laws of the corporation. And, by the same laws, she is never permitted to enter the city without asking leave of the Lord Mayor, and being held at bay until the following ridiculous farce has been played.

The old Temple Bar gate is never closed, except when it is announced that the Queen is about to visit the city. As she approaches, it swings upon its ponderous hinges, and is shut against her. She pauses to await the pleasure of the lord mayor, and now a trumpet is blown, the old gate swings back to its place, and the Queen with her suite passes. And

this ludicrous scene has to be gone through every time she enters the city, which I am told she never does, except to attend the levees of the lord mayor, which vie in magnificence with those of the occupant of the throne.

And then the pageant of the Queen, passing in and out, decked off in state, with the troop of nobility which constitute her suite, presents a spectacle which moves this vast population like the waves of the sea, while beggary and rags slink away before it into the dark lanes and recesses of the city.

A somewhat similar farce has to be played every time the lord mayor visits the courts of Westminster Hall, on which occasions the members of the court and of the bar are required to appear in scarlet robes, and play the monkey in various acts of homage.

It is these little fantastics of the feudal ages, and these only, which have given the chief officer of this little municipality a renown little less illustrious than that of the incumbent of the throne.

I shall not attempt to describe the solemn trumpery which attends the assembling and sitting of the courts themselves, the flourish of trumpets, the wigs, the robes, the ermine, &c. &c. All of which, and a thousand times more, are effectually employed to *awe*, and at the same time to *gratify the people at their own expense*, their *passion* for such things having been pampered from their infancy up, and all their ideas of *dignity*, *authority*, *and order*, being associated with parade and show, insomuch that they would lose all respect for the government if they were dispensed with, and the strong cords which now hold it together would become as tow.

"You must see Edinburgh, you must see Edinburgh," every where saluted my ears as I advanced northward. And when I arrived at Edinburgh, "You must see the crown-room, you must see the crown-room," was about the first salutation I met. Well, thought I to myself, Edinburgh must be the gem of Scotland, and the crown-room the gem of Edinburgh—a gem within a gem.

And so to Castle Hill I hastened in quest of the crown-room. Entering within the castle walls, in rear of the town, I ascended from one gallery of guns to another, until I arrived at the top, when a most enchanting rural prospect opened upon me; but it had no charms for me just then, for the attractions of the crown-room had fully pre-possessed all my regards, and to the crown-room I turned my eager steps. On arriving at the door, I found a crowd there waiting for admission, the room then being full.

Very soon the time was up, and those within made their exit, when another company was admitted, among whom I had the good luck to be one, the admission fee being sixpence sterling. In the centre of the room was an elevated platform or table, upon which was placed a large glass case, and within that lay the precious relics. There were just enough in the room to form a circle around the platform, standing close—and there stood that circle of human beings, as silent and motionless as though they had been corpses, and that room had been their sepulchre, so awe-struck were they at sight of the objects before them.

And what were those objects that so absorbed their attention, and attracted their admiring gaze, do you ask? They

were such as do not meet one's eye every day, and indeed such as it is the privilege of few in this world of ours ever to set eyes on. I was told they had been lost for ages, and had been found in a great iron chest, some fifty years back, concealed in a recess in the castle, and that the people's regards were drawn out the more upon them for that.

At last the deep, strong tides of emotion rose so high in some of the little circle, or rather, I should say, receded so low, as to set the organs of speech a-going, and the half-suppressed ejaculations, "O how beautiful!"—"Did you ever see the like?" broke from those marble lips.

They now began to breathe easier, or they would soon have been in reality what they seemed—a little more intensity of feeling apparently would have snapped the attenuated cord, and set the spirit free, and that room would indeed have been their sepulchre.

And now you hear them making remarks to each other, and by and by you see a smile, and even hear a laugh—but do not wonder at this, for you know it is a law of our being that familiarity breeds, first, cosiness, then indifference, and finally contempt. It is on this principle that we Americans entertain such a contempt for crowned heads. As we are all sovereigns, and are constantly surrounded by them on every hand, we come to think very little of them, whether at the plough-tail in our own country, or upon a throne in the old world.

But what were those wonderful things, do you reiterate? Aye, as I said, being all sovereigns in our country, we regard them as very cheap things; that is our standard, and

we know of no other to try sovereigns by any where. But here the case is directly reversed. Among the millions of people who constitute a nation, there is but one sovereign; and as it is also a law of our being, that we value things higher or lower according to their scarcity or abundance, sovereigns here are valued, on this principle, many millions of times higher than with us.

Again, these scarce sovereigns may make themselves still scarcer than legitimacy ever made them, by secluding themselves from observation, and only appearing at distant intervals; aided by the trappings of pomp, they thus inspire the multitude with an awful sense of their sacredness. In some countries, as in Thibet, the game has been so successfully played, that the sovereign actually receives divine honors, and is worshipped as a God. And even in many of the dark countries of Europe they talk about "the divine right of kings."

Are you impatient for an answer? I was going to say, that it is another law of our being that men make much more parade about those assumed rights, which do not belong to them, than about those *real, bonâ fide* rights, concerning which there can be no question. Hence the sovereigns of the old world, through their minions, are eternally harping about their "divine rights," while from our sovereigns you never hear a word about them. The reason is, that those wily gamesters know very well that they are playing off a farce upon the people, while our sovereigns, under the full consciousness that no question can be raised as to the validity of their God-given rights, put themselves to no trouble about the matter.

And now for the engrossing objects in the crown-room, but I must first bespeak from you a seriousness appropriate to the occasion. The first object which attracted attention then, was what they call a crown, tinselled, bejewelled a little, and serrated, but not half so pretty as some little boys' caps I have seen at the shops. Then there lay a clumsy thing they call "the sword of state," and by it a thing denominated "a sceptre," also a mace and some jewels, the whole constituting what they call "the Regalia of the Kings of Scotland," who, take them all in all, were as profligate and worthless a set of men as ever cursed a country.

I do not set these things down to the disparagement of the Scots—not at all: they are a noble race of men, and true men, too; whether they be royalists or republicans, they play no false game.

These things teach a great practical lesson, which is vital to the interests of the race, and should be graven on the memory and on the heart of every child in our republic. Blessed are the children who are beyond the sweep of all such influences as these, and blessed is the country which spurns them from her borders.

The question here forces itself upon me, how was it possible for Cromwell to break in upon and control such an influence as this? And how does it exalt our conceptions of him, that he was able to do it—to override all opposition, and hush the elements into submission.

At Dunbar, I was upon the ground where the battle-scene which gave Scotland to Cromwell transpired; and as the events connected with it illustrate the insane devotion

of even good men to the "divine right" of profligates to butcher them, I will rehearse the circumstances here.

Cromwell had penetrated as far as Edinburgh; but, without having accomplished any thing of consequence, he set out on his return, apparently with the design of retracing his steps to England. The Scots, who had fled to the Pentland hills on his approach to Edinburgh, followed him in what they regarded as his retreat, and to their utmost harassed his rear.

At Dunbar he came to a stand, and took up his position upon a rising ground in front of the town, while the Scots took up theirs upon an opposite height. Leslie was the commander of the Scottish army, and the Covenanter ministers were his counsellors, the latter controlling every thing, and infusing into the whole army their own religious fanaticism; and many of them took their places in the ranks.

Nor was Cromwell at all behind them in stirring up and fortifying his men by religious appeal. At length, by the aid of his glass, he discovered a movement in the Scottish ranks, and immediately he exclaimed, in accents which nerved the whole army to the conflict, "They are coming; the Lord hath delivered them into our hands." Both armies rushed to the contest, and fought with desperation; but after an hour or two, the Scottish army gave way and fled, leaving four thousand dead upon the field, and ten thousand prisoners, a number within one thousand of Cromwell's entire army; and among the dead were found many Covenanter ministers. And now all Scotland submitted to Cromwell.

And it was in behalf of one whom they considered "the

Lord's anointed," the profligate Charles the Second, that these fanatics fought so desperately. They regarded the government as having been brought to the block in the person of the first Charles, and as having lain headless and bleeding ever since, and they were ready to move heaven and earth to effect a resurrection; and all this, though the government of Cromwell was mild and just, and proffered them full security and protection as a religious sect.

Upon the death of Cromwell, Charles ascended the throne; and, as though in judgment upon them, these same Covenanters, who had faced the cannon's mouth in his behalf, were immediately subjected to a most cruel persecution—were driven from their churches, imprisoned, many suffered martyrdom, and others fled to the mountains, and took refuge in the caves and dens of the earth.

Wonderful man, that he should have been able to break the spell, and not only hold at abeyance the constitutional claimant to the throne, but the most powerful aristocracy the world ever saw; and—more than all—that he should be able to overcome and to *cow* that servile devotion to royalty, which was so deeply seated in the hearts of the people, and which led them to return, "like the dog to his vomit," after his death!

Nor is the power of that influence which his giant strength overcame, less strikingly attested in the combined effort of the whole pack of British historians to hunt and despoil his memory. True to their instincts, these panders to royalty have so far succeeded in their dirty work, as to neutralize the influence of his great achievements over privi-

lege and power, in the minds of the people, insomuch that few have any higher conceptions of him than as a mighty moral monster, the Usurper and the Regicide, who laid his sacrilegious hand upon the sacred prerogatives of legitimacy.*

And sorry am I to say, that so far-reaching is the

* Mr. McGregor, the learned M. P. from Glasgow, and editor of a late edition of De Lolme's work on the British constitution, rebukes that professed Swiss republican for passing in silence the important epoch of Cromwell's administration. He speaks of it as "the most important legislative period in English history," and as being characterized for men of extraordinary energy and abilities. Civil war in England was put down, Scotland and Ireland were reduced to obedience, and above all, it was then that the British navy, the great bulwark of the country, took its rise. Previously thirteen ships were all that could be mustered, and it had not a man that had ever seen a sea-fight, unless with a pirate. Under Blake, Cromwell's naval commander, the navy rose to become the terror of all Europe, and from that time it had been the right arm of the national strength. There was no impressment then, no one was forced to serve, either in the army or navy, and yet neither soldiers nor seaman were wanting. "With some intolerant exceptions," he adds, "the affairs of the country were administered with a strict regard to justice."

When it was announced that Charles the Second was to be restored, Mr. McG. says the people seemed to be entirely carried away like little children, so overjoyed were they. His words are, that "the nation seemed to be mentally drunk, insomuch that no conditions were made with that profligate monarch."

In the expulsion of the successor of this Charles, James II., the British people boast of having broken away from the restraints of legitimacy, but the spell is in reality as powerful as ever.

mighty influence of which I am speaking, that the yell which has been raised against this wonderful man by the creatures of legitimacy here, has found an echo even upon our own side of the Atlantic. How often has a single taunt about the "psalm-singing administration of Cromwell" brought a dark shadow over this the brightest epoch in English history, in the estimation of multitudes of my countrymen, and placed them in the false attitude of panders to legitimacy, and enemies to the progress of the race!

Be it admitted that Cromwell was a religious enthusiast—and I am not disposed to deny it—sift out all his religion if you will, and give it to the winds as chaff, and how does that affect the character of his administration? With all his religious enthusiasm, and even frenzy, if you please, never before, since England had a name, had justice and equity borne such sway in the island. And the annals of British vituperation and abuse may be searched in vain for any act of his life which casts a stain upon his high moral integrity, or convicts him either of being actuated by motives of personal aggrandizement, or of *insincerity* in his religious belief.

And, viewed in its true light, his very enthusiasm in religion, false though it be admitted to have been, only adds a lustre to his name; for with all his religious frenzy, he was so far raised above the common level of the race, that he could grant free toleration and protection to other sects, and those too, who had sought his life, and that at an era of the world when such an idea had never been born. Wonderful man, that he was thus raised above all the ordinary weaknesses of humanity!

Such and so great was this extraordinary man, and such and so great the power of that influence which was rolled back, like an ocean-tide, at his bidding, and held at abeyance while he lived. Let the minions of privilege and power prowl about his memory; but O, my countrymen, do not you bring dishonor upon the sacred cause of freedom, by joining the pack!

Still another illustration occurs. At *Falkirk*, in Scotland, I met with a most extraordinary document. It was an address to George the Third, by "*The old men of Falkirk*" of his day, and was designed as a solace to him in the afflictions brought upon him by the rebellion in the American colonies. It breathed a most dutiful, and even affectionate spirit of allegiance, deprecated the rebellion as a most pestilent affair, got up by factious and turbulent spirits, out of which nothing but unmixed evil could arise to those concerned in it; but deprecated it more especially as a most grievous annoyance to his majesty's peace, and concluded by expressing the hope that quiet would speedily be restored, and his majesty soon again be permitted to rejoice in the dutiful allegiance of his subjects throughout all his dominions.

The thought struck me, that if these *old men of Falkirk* could arise out of their graves, alight upon our shores, and see what the factious colonies had come to, whose audacious misbehavior had so aroused their sympathies for their royal master, and whose speedy subjection they so much desired to see; that if they could look abroad over our country, and contrast the indications of comfort and enjoy-

ment every where to be seen, with the misery and rags with which they were surrounded in the dominions of old King George, possibly they might breathe some regrets over the past. And poor old King George! he has gone where he can no longer receive the homage of "The old men of Falkirk."

Honest souls! Fidelity to their king was a part of their religion, while they regarded rebellion against his authority as a sin against high heaven, second only to that which cast out the rebel angels. Had a planet broken loose from the control of those laws which held it in its orbit, and rushed wildly through the immensity of space, it could scarcely have presented a more appalling spectacle to these "old men of Falkirk," than did the swinging loose of these colonies from their allegiance to the British throne.

Like the poor widow, they "did what they could." Standing as they were, upon the crumbling brink of the grave, they could not testify their fidelity to their royal master by seizing the weapons of death and rushing to the conflict. And probably the exactions of the government had so robbed them of their available means, that they neither had the disposition nor the ability to do any thing more in that direction. But they *could* pour the oil of consolation upon that royal heart, now beating low under the oppression of its grief, and anon throbbing tumultuously under the impulses of vengeance. And I have no doubt the remembrance of that act diffused a serene joy over the evening of their days, as refreshing as the breezes of paradise.

To be able to appreciate the feelings of these "old men

of Falkirk," we must rid ourselves of all those new-born ideas of self-government, which have sprung into existence in the free atmosphere of the new world. We must consider into what a state of hopeless anarchy a people were supposed to have plunged themselves in those days, in breaking away from the paternal restraints of legitimacy, and what a talismanic power there was in the words *legitimacy*, *loyalty*, and *allegiance*, connecting all that is noble and praiseworthy in human aspirations, with fidelity to the sovereign, and all that is execrable in the outbursts of human depravity, with rebellion against his authority. All this must be taken into account in order to a due appreciation of the merits of this act of these "old men of Falkirk," and of the amount of consolation which they were able to appropriate to themselves from its performance, and which must have "flowed as a river."

Justice to "the old men of Falkirk," perhaps, requires me to add, that their geographical position subjected them, in a pre-eminent degree, to the influences of which I am speaking, as the battle-field of Falkirk, where Wallace, the idol of their hearts, was finally overthrown by the first Edward, lay spread out before them from the cradle to the grave; and they recognize the descendants of Wallace in the present race of British kings. Of the power of this local influence, I was able to form some conception from the lively emotion which played upon the countenance and moved the eloquence of an "old man of Falkirk" of the present day, as he pointed out to me the various objects of interest upon that field, and recounted the incidents of the

battle scene, taking care to add, that "*Wallace lost the day through the treachery of some of his generals.*"

Such then, and so great is the spell of the past, and such its power over the destinies of this people, insomuch, that the occupants of the palace and of the hovel, sustain substantially the same relation to each other now that they did centuries ago.

CHAPTER XXV.

PASTIMES OF THE HIGHER ORDERS—THEIR INFLUENCE, ETC.

Such as I have described being the power of the influences which have descended upon this people from the centuries of the past, it is not so strange, that they should prostrate themselves very low before rank and title, nor is it so strange, that one of the most eminent of modern historians (Hallam) should defile his illustrious pages with the remark, that "there is something in loyalty (to the king) as elevating and purifying as patriotism itself;" that is, that devotion to a sovereign is as noble a virtue as devotion to the country.

In England, the term loyalty has, in fact, quite as much reference to the nobility as to the crown, for they have ever been the rulers of the country.

In illustration of the kind of moral influence which goes down among the people from the venerated orders above, I will give a few, out of the innumerable facts which have fallen under my own observation.

And, as a significant preliminary, it may well be conjectured what must be the influence of a class of men, thus venerated, whose chief end of life is to kill time by throwing the reins upon the neck of indulgence. Who does not

know, that, always and every-where, individuals and communities are distinguished for good morals about in proportion to their devotion to some useful employment—that is, where industry is allowed to reap its reward, and that profligacy and vice keep even pace with habits of idleness and the means of indulgence? So well understood is this matter in our own country, that a man's character is justly suspected, if he has no employment upon his hands to keep him out of mischief; nor is it strange that it should be so, when we consider the natural preferences of the human heart, in connection with the fact, that temptations hang in clusters around the idle.

And here comes up a preliminary illustration, which I had not thought to introduce, but it is so directly in point, that I cannot deny it a place. Without a word of allusion to the subject, it might readily be conceived what would be the effect of the sons of the nobility and gentry gaining admission to families a little below them in rank, drawn thither perhaps by the attractions of a beautiful daughter. The parents, who know well enough that no such alliance would be tolerated, even if meditated, yet too often feel flattered by the attentions of the young man, and only when it is too late, have discovered the sad mistake. Often do all their domestic hopes wither down beneath the hand of the spoiler.

These are cases of frequent occurrence, and even where the parents have the sense and discretion to discountenance all approaches of the sort, they are often powerless to prevent the catastrophe. From my esteemed friend, H. R.,

Esq., I have learned some most affecting details upon this subject. Among the families, he said, who were liable to suffer were those of the clergy, and here it was that the young expectant of ancestral honors, the eldest son, sometimes found his victims. The clergy being composed, to a great extent, of the younger sons of the nobility, are so far considered as a sort of offshoot from the order, and as such are rather high up in the descending scale. But yet, they are often poor, and dependent for a living upon some patron lord. Here is one who has a lovely daughter; she attracts the attention of the embryo lord, and with such a halo of glory radiating from his brow, he readily wins her regards. The parents may be distressed, may weep in anguish, but they cannot help it. They have submitted to privation to bestow every advantage upon their daughter, and she comes out of her educational course with a highly cultivated intellect, and adorned with every accomplishment, a blooming and beautiful girl, the pride and solace of the parents' heart, and the admiration of all. The young man is perhaps sincere in his attachment, but he knows he cannot make her his own, and the parents know it, and the daughter knows it, but still the intimacy goes on; the parents, in their anguish, dare not remonstrate lest they should offend the patron lord, upon whose pleasure they are dependent for their bread, and the consequence too often is the desolation of all their hopes in the fall of the loved one.

Sad, indeed, are the traces of desolation and despair which these depredators have thus left upon some of the best families in England!

But I commenced with the design of referring to some of the pastimes with which the nobility and gentry contrive to wear away their time, and of the necessary effect upon the orders below. And nothing more strikingly shows the obsequious devotion of the lower to the higher orders, and the power of the influence for evil which thus goes down among the masses, than the pictorial representations of these pastimes and sports which are paraded in public places for the special entertainment of plebeian eyes. The sitting-rooms of hotels are generally all hung around with them, while the signs of the same are of a character to correspond, such as "Greyhound Inn," "The Spotted Dog," "Nag's Head Inn," or "Duke" such a one's "coat of arms," &c., &c.

Let us commence with the chase, which is a favorite amusement here. Scarcely can a man be considered a gentleman, who has not a pack of hounds, and a stud of four or more hunting horses, and a groom to every two horses. Let us take the hunting statistics of a single county as a specimen. Says a London paper, "There are in Yorkshire a thousand hunting men, averaging four horses and two grooms each, at an annual expense of £500,000. Add another £100,000 for the hounds and their keep, and we have £600,000," or $3,000,000 for that single county alone.

Now let us follow them to the chase, arrayed in hunting costume, (scarlet) and mounted upon their hunting-horses, with their hounds, grooms, and servants in attendance. Is it the animal's skin they are after, his fur, or his flesh? Ha! what would they do with them? Do they hie them-

selves away to a point in the mountain to lie in wait for their prey? No, they are above all that. With true aristocratic magnanimity, they give the animal every possible advantage, first allowing him to bound off, then, in due time, letting slip the hounds, themselves starting at the signal in pursuit, at the top of their speed; dashing away, under whip and spur, over rough places and smooth, leaping fences and ditches and whatever comes in their way, each struggling for the mastery, as though his eternity depended upon it: these grown-up children are chasing a hare to kill time—that is all.

No; that is not all. "There lives a man," said Mr. N., of Spital-on-the-Tweed, as he was driving me in his carriage past a rather aristocratic-looking mansion—"there lives a man who was ruined by his red-coat sons. The mother," he continued, "was ambitious to have her sons associate with young men of the high hunting order, as it was a great honor, they being only wealthy farmers. And thus by attaching themselves, as a sort of *fag-end*, to their 'superiors,' the family was reduced from wealth to poverty in a short time. But for that," he added, "the father would at this moment have been worth £100,000," or half a million of dollars.

And who pays the three millions of dollars expended annually in that county alone upon this amusement? Well, the landlords get it from their attorneys, the attorneys get it from the tenant-farmers, and the tenant-farmers get it from the poor laborers, leaving them to destitution and rags.

Nor is the *horse-racing* mania, which pervades all the

higher orders, at all less prolific in burdensome expenditure, or in corrupting moral influence. From the opening of spring till the setting in of winter, *the races, the races, the races* form one continued din, from one end of the kingdom to another; the excursion trains of all the railroads are set in motion at less than half price, to carry persons to and from the races; and so great is the rush, that the income from this source contributes largely to swell the aggregate of receipts.

In traversing the kingdom, I am frequently thrown into the midst of these disgusting scenes. Arriving in a town at the dusk of evening, I often find it in a state of perfect uproar; and it is generally a three days' siege, during which people move about warily, with their hands upon their purses. The din is kept up through the live-long night, and it is in vain to think of seeking repose. The gangs of gamblers, jugglers, mountebanks, thimble-riggers, whirligigs, pickpockets, and swindlers of every description, who follow the races, and grace the grounds during the day, come pouring into town during the night, and together with the accompanying rabble, both noble and ignoble, constitute a medley over which Satan himself might be well pleased.

Some conception may be formed of the scenes which transpire upon these occasions, from the fact published in the papers here, that during the late races at Newcastle, *a hundred and sixty* gold watches were picked from the pockets of the nobility and gentry present. This may have been an unusual number, for aught I know, or it may not; but certain it is that no occasion of the kind transpires without

drawing together whole platoons of thieves and swindlers, who claim the privilege of indulging in their favorite sports as well as their superiors; and, for aught I know, they may undertake to justify themselves by their example. When they see those whom they have been taught to reverence, taking thousands from each other's pockets without returning an equivalent, by which many are reduced to penury, it is natural enough that they should regard it as quite a venial offence to take so small a perquisite as a gold watch, by which no one is probably injured.

But the wealthy and the great must have some way of murdering time, and the humbler classes some way of giving expression to their reverence and their admiration, if it be only to stand at a respectful distance to see their horses run.

And who will undertake to say, that these are not necessary evils, inseparable from such an order of things, and as such, essential to the completeness of the system?

I reason the case on this wise; you cannot break up the standing amusements of the nobility and gentry, without breaking up the order, and you cannot do that without breaking down the constitution of the country. Without these amusements there could be no such thing as a nobility—what would they do with themselves?—they would die of ennui. If these evils then are the consequence, should they not be regarded as sustaining a highly honorable relation, inasmuch as the entire system of government must stand or fall with them?

You may call this burlesque, or call it what you will,

there is something in it to be reverenced after all, and that is *truth*. Such a system of government as this presupposes just such a state of things, nor can it exist without it until the laws of our being have been changed.

I have spoken of the *tournament*, which disgraced the dark ages of chivalry in Europe—even this relic of a semibarous age is still in vogue in the island. Its exercises consist of feats of horsemanship, with a dexterous use of the spear, requiring great agility and skill, and involving great danger. I saw the ground where Lord Eggleton (Ayreshire) recently had his, at an expense to himself of a million and a half of dollars. And after drawing together the nobility and gentry of the kingdom, and many from different countries on the Continent, the fun was all spoiled by a long-continued rain, which broke up the whole thing; and this covey of noble birds were all dispersed, with drooping wing, to their homes.

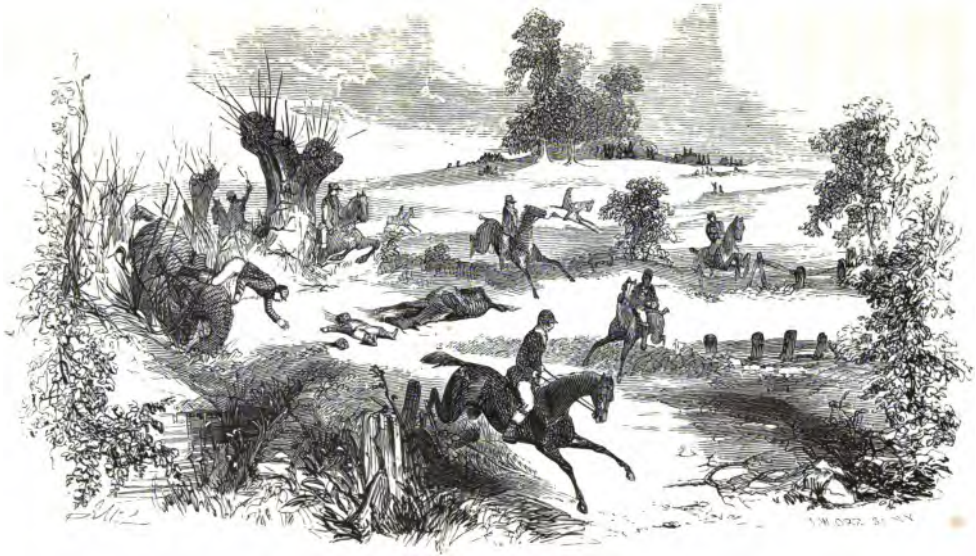
But the *steeple-chase*, the *steeple-chase*! Well, go with me along Cheapside; *there* is the picture at the shop-window, and it is a good representation, and not a pictorial monstrosity, as you might at first glance suppose.

It is designed as a *fac-simile* of the scenes which actually transpire every year upon different parts of this island, for the special entertainment of "my lords and gentlemen," and as gala days for all classes. As an amusement, it is the same in kind with the gladiatorial and other inhuman shows of heathen Rome, at which men and wild beasts were slaughtered for the gratification of excited myriads, who feasted their eyes upon the scene.

You see the horses, how they lay themselves to the ground, while the riders are urging them forward with all the energy at their command. You see them leaping high fences, clearing broad and deep ditches, and descending hideous precipices under whip and spur—but lo! there go horse and rider, dashed headlong against the rocks, while others are flitting past with almost lightning speed, as though nothing had occurred. The more fortunate succeed in reaching the goal; and then, what a triumph to enjoy, with their comrades dead and dying on the track! But the groans of the dying are drowned in the deafening shouts which rise from the neighboring hills.

Let us now approach and survey the scene itself. The track, three or four miles around, lies over precipitous heights, and intervening ravines, fences and hedges, seven and eight feet high, with wide and deep ditches running close by them on the opposite side, so that they cannot be seen by horse or rider, and both fence and ditch have to be cleared at a single leap. And to increase the horrors of the scene, neither horse nor rider are allowed to pass over the ground, or know any thing about the obstructions they are to meet with beforehand.

We will suppose that, by almost a miracle, they had all had the good luck to pass the precipices in safety—onward they come, leaping fences and hedges, and clearing ditches; but see! one of the foremost fails to clear both fence and ditch at the single leap, and comes down in the ditch, and, in an instant, two or three others, which were close behind, are down upon them, crushing horses and riders to death, while the more fortunate are far away.



STEEPLE CHASE.

Perched upon the most prominent look-out, upon the neighboring heights, are to be seen the nobility and gentry, enjoying the sport, while at a respectful distance the acclivities swarm with human beings of the plebeian stamp, who, as a humble offering to their superiors, as well as from their native impulses, rend the heavens with their shouts.

The horses which survive, come out dripping with gore, the spurs of their riders having been buried in their sides to urge them to their desperate leaps; and the poor creatures, if they survive the ordeal, are often rendered unfit for further service; and not unfrequently horses valued at thousands of pounds are killed with their riders.

Can any thing be more savage and demoralizing? Is not this a refinement of barbarism, at which American sensibility would revolt? Even with the most fortunate result the case admits of, which is, that all have escaped with their lives, what *less* can be said of it?

And thus it is that the whole kingdom is subjected to the most demoralizing influences to make sport for these men. Shame! *shame* upon a country professing civilization, of which such things can be said! Shame upon its profligate rulers, and shame upon its obsequious masses!

And here I had thought to stop; but now that the matter is in hand, I will add a scene which I witnessed in the Highlands of Scotland, consisting of the Highland Games, which are celebrated annually at the seat of the Duke of Athol, for the special entertainment of himself and the gentry around. These Highlanders claim to be the descendants of the ancient Fingalian race, of which Ossian was the last.

On my way, I passed through those wildly romantic scenes, from which Ossian is said to have drawn his inspirations, and where his departed heroes flitted from mountain top to mountain top, wrapped in the mists of the morning; and mists there were at the time I passed, wreathed in graceful folds around the brows of the mountains, and lit up into a glow by the bright beams of the morning sun. Beautiful drapery, thought I, to fold around a departed spirit! And then the hills and mountains were thrown up in such glorious confusion, and all covered over with that most graceful of all the trees of the forest, the mountain larch—what could they more!

Onward we drove, through mountain gorge after mountain gorge, along the Tay, the Tummel, the Garry, and Bruar, which came gurgling down their rocky beds; passing the battle-field of Killikrankie, where King William, of England, was overwhelmed by the Highland clans, which came pouring down the mountain side, and also the rock on which stood the castle of Macbeth.

And now we are at Blair Athol, and upon the playground, a level area surrounded by mountains, of every grotesque form, alternating and contrasting with magical effect, while a little way distant, the wild, dashing waters of the Bruar come tumbling down their precipitous bed; "the Falls of the Bruar" constituting one of the attractions of the Highlands.

The steep hill-side, back of the plain, matted with grass, served as a gallery, which swarmed with human beings, who looked as though they would come down in an avalanche.

Twenty-one salutes with cannon were fired, to begin with, which echoed and reverberated among the hills and mountains, like distant thunder, for a long, long time, and finally died away in the distance. It was the romance of sound running wild, and galloping about among the hills, and was entrancing to the soul.

But, hark! the blast of the bag-pipe, the natural-born music of these wilds, announces the approach of the cavaliers, a band of picked men, with the Duke at their head, uniformed in the highest style of Highland military costume, which is in harmony with the wildness of their own mountains.

Silver buckles graced their shoes, diamond-plaided stockings, of brilliant colors, covered the calves of their legs, no pants, nor breeches even, and nothing but a skirt instead, and that so short as to leave six or eight inches, embracing the knee, entirely bare. This skirt was overlaid in front with a small apron of long horse-hair, over which hung silken knobs, or tassels, of a color to contrast with the hair. A blue broad-cloth coatee, ornamented with military buttons, was buttoned up to the chin, and over this was a sash, or long plaid shawl, which was passed at the middle, under the right arm, and the fringed ends thrown in opposite directions, over the left shoulder, hanging gracefully down three or four feet before and behind, and floating in the breeze. Upon their heads were low cloth caps, ornamented with evergreens, instead of feathers, and in one hand was held a rotund brazen shield, about eighteen inches in diameter, and a musket in the other, with swords by their sides—all fine looking men.

And now, all things ready, the games commence, and these stalwart sons of Fingal display prodigies of strength. First came "the pudding-stone" game, which consists in throwing with one hand a stone weighing twenty-two pounds, and the one brawny arm propelled it 22 to 24 feet.

Throwing the hammer came next, which missile consisted of a cannon-ball, weighing sixteen pounds, with a hole drilled through it and a handle inserted, by which it was thrown to a distance of about 90 feet.

Next came the extraordinary feat of "turning the cabar." The cabar consists of a pole, fifteen or twenty feet long, some five or six inches through at the base, and tapering gradually to the other end, where it was two or three inches through. By the strength of three men, this pole was raised to a perpendicular, with the big end upward, and the little end resting upon the ground. The operator bends over, puts one shoulder against the pole, and, with both hands under it, raises it alone, balances it, and allowing it to incline a little forward, runs with it thus balanced a rod or two, and then, with almost superhuman effort, gives it such a toss, that, as the big end touches the earth, the little end reaches a perpendicular, and falls over in a direction opposite from the performer.

The *jumping*, which came next, evinced great muscular power. And then followed the *sword dance*, which was performed by a single person, and consisted in "tripping the light fantastic toe" around and over two swords, which lay across each other, bounding from one side to the other, and touching them with the toe at various points, which was done with much agility.

And finally, the performances terminated with the foot-race, in which seven engaged. The distance ran was one mile and forty rods, which was passed over in four minutes and fifty seconds, making about *fourteen miles and a half* to the hour, a fast trotting horse being put to the top of his speed to keep up with them.

The prizes were awarded, and the company dispersed, a part of them to their mountain glens, and a part of them to repair, I was told, to scenes of carousal and debauch, with which these occasions are always followed.

Hitherto, all has been romance, fun, and enjoyment. The darker shades of the picture are yet to be brought out.

I was credibly informed, that seldom an occasion of the kind transpired without some of the performers being destroyed by the rupture of blood-vessels. And how could it well be otherwise? It would seem to be almost a miracle, if they escaped. And yet, knowing these consequences to be inevitable, the Duke and the minor landlords around him keep up these games for their own special amusement from year to year, and thus they have come down from remote antiquity. These landlords subscribe liberally to raise money to be distributed to the victors, and make the necessary preparations; and on special occasions, the Duke takes his Highlanders to London, and other parts of the kingdom, where they perform for the entertainment of "my lords and gentlemen."

But this is not all, the poor peasantry were not there. Whether they had not the means to get there, or whether their presence would have "derogated from the respectability

of the occasion," I do not know. But "here hangs a tale," which must be told, though it spoil all the romance of the Highlands. The condition of the peasantry here, is even more precarious and wretched than in other parts of the island, and, secluded as they are, but little is ever heard or known of their sufferings. Not a case of perishing by hunger can occur in Ireland, but it is soon trumpeted upon our side of the Atlantic; but multitudes perish in these Highlands in every season of scarcity, shut out as they are from ready sources of relief, and no tidings of the event ever reaches our shores. A spirited article lately appeared in the London Daily News, depicting, in doleful colors, these periodical and frequently recurring scenes of starvation and death, and calling aloud for some remedy for the evil. And from the opportunities I have had of seeing for myself, I am satisfied it was no exaggerated account of the matter.

And thus, while one man here can luxuriate in possessions so extensive, that he has three or four magnificent and richly ornamented parks, twenty or thirty miles asunder, and can expend immense treasures upon his extravagances, the poor laborers, from whose toil all his income arises, sink in death, for lack of bread to satisfy their hunger.

I have said nothing of cock-fights; nothing of the annual migration to the moors of the North in summer, and to the sunny South in winter; nothing of levees, feasting, gambling, and nameless other things to which idlers are necessarily subject.

And then, think of the millions upon millions of money which are drawn into this vortex—drawn from the honest

earnings of the poor laboring man, who is turned away penniless to suffer and die; and think too of the streams of moral pollution which must necessarily flow down and diffuse themselves abroad among the masses.

Nor is this all; with all the vast sums they receive, by means of these extravagances their expenditures, in most cases, far transcend their incomes, and most of them have become deeply involved in debt, and they are put to the greatest straits to get along. I am credibly informed, that they often go in debt to tailors and other tradesmen in London, and pay a hundred per cent. above the market price to be waited on a term of years; and honest people complain, that advantage is taken of this by tradesmen to charge prompt pay customers from twenty-five to fifty per cent. more for it.

Their estates they cannot alienate, as they have only a life interest in them; but that life interest they often mortgage, and if they chance to die soon after, the mortgagee loses every thing, as the successor takes immediate possession. And if they continue to live on, they themselves often lose every thing, and are turned out of their possessions, and then, with the odds and ends they pick up, they embark for the continent, where they can live pretty much at their ease for a fourth part of what it costs them to keep up the style considered essential to their rank in England, without which, they lose all consideration with the people. Debauched and broken down noblemen, who have not the means of living in England, are to be met with in every part of the continent, and they contrive to pass current with the continentals, who have nothing to compare with them.

Extravagance and debauchery, then, seem to be doing their work upon the oppressor himself, as well as upon his victim; and who knows but this is one of the ways in which the evil is to be cured?

And what will the country do? What will become of it, should this, its right arm, rot off at the shoulder-blade? Already the alarm has been sounded in the public journals, that the nobility are in danger of being blotted out, by reason of families becoming extinct. With wakeful solicitude, public attention has been called to the fact, that thirty peerages are now extinct from this cause, and that fifty more will be when the present incumbents are dead.

But the beauty of it is, that what is thus deprecated as a calamity, is the hope of England; and never, till this incubus has been removed, will her prostrate masses rise up from their degradation. There are other causes which are co-operating to the same end, of which I shall speak in another place, and which bid fair to put a new aspect upon the affairs of this island.

CHAPTER XXVI.

HOW PLEBEIANS ARE "BROUGHT OUT," AND WHAT FOR. OUR OWN INSTITUTIONS AN ANOMALY.

TWELVE miles up the Thames from London is that delightful place of resort, Richmond Park, consisting of an area of more than two thousand acres, upon an elevated platform which overlooks the romantic valley of the Thames.

There stood the tyrant Henry the Eighth, watching for the signal-rocket which was to be sent up as the axe fell upon the neck of Anne Boleyn, his repudiated queen.

But chopping off heads has given place to other appliances more in accordance with the spirit of the times, though not less effectual in accomplishing the great ends of government here. The people of England are now ruled, not exactly as a ship is kept a-going after the sails have been taken down, nor exactly as a certain animal is decoyed to the slaughter by a few kernels of corn, after all attempts to drive him with clubs and stones have proved unavailing—and yet something after that sort.

Formerly, as now, the strength of the government lay in those mysterious influences illustrated in a preceding chapter. There is still a lingering veneration for ancient forms

and ceremonies, rank and title, which, though it would be weak as tow in enforcing the edicts of the eighth Henry now, nevertheless is as omnipotent as ever, with the new adaptations to which it has been adjusted. The people seem to be, for the most part, as willing as ever to go staggering along under the burdens of government, only the latter must appeal a little more to the principle of idolatry, and a little less to that of fear, and tickle them occasionally with some trifling concession.

And as a piece of mechanism adapted to the weaknesses of humanity, this government stands a proud monument to human genius and human forecast. The character of the people is so formed under the various influences of which I have spoken, that they meekly bow their necks to the yoke prepared for them. A large proportion of them appear never to have dreamed that they were born for any higher end than to live for "their superiors." Each class has a little world of its own, all to itself, it is true, and each individual of it can figure there, after some sort; but he is so cramped, and burdened, and hedged in, that it is of little use for him to try to be any thing else than what he is. If ever one rises from the rank in which he was born, it is from a pure act of grace. In illustration of this, take the following conversation which I had with a gentleman at the above-named park the other day.

As I was emerging from the green-house of "The Kew Gardens," (a mile and a half distant from the park,) with two friends, the structure itself, which was of iron and glass, attracted attention. One question after another led to the

disclosure of the fact by the person I was conversing with, that Paxton, the projector of the Crystal Palace, is head gardener to the Duke of Devonshire.

Ah, then, said I, the Duke of Devonshire's gardener is a bigger man than himself, is he? "Why, no," said the man, (looking up amazed that such a thing should be hinted,) and added, "how do you make that out? Paxton," he continued, "could never have been any thing at all if the duke had not brought him out."

And how did he bring him out? said I. "Well, Paxton," he said, "told him the plan he had thought of, which was little more than to apply the principle upon which he had constructed a glass house for the duke himself, and the latter encouraged him to go and throw it in."

Well, well, thought I, how is this? "Paxton could never have been any thing if the duke had not brought him out!" These words kept haunting me all day, and when I returned to my lodgings, I repeated them to a number of gentlemen, and asked them how it was that so much credit was to be given to the Duke of Devonshire as fairly to eclipse poor Paxton? and they all appeared to understand the matter just as the gentleman above alluded to did, and seemed surprised that I could not see how it was. "No man," they said, "could come into notice without being brought out." They even instanced Sir Robert Peel, and said, "that with all his immense wealth, he never could have risen if he had not first bowed to and served the great ones of the land, and been lifted by them into power—though he afterwards took the notion to set up for independence.

So, then, said I, none of you can be any thing unless some great one puts his little finger under you, and lifts you up? "No," said one of them, in great simplicity; "how can we?" He then inquired, in all gravity, how people got brought out in my country. *Brought out!* said I; *they bring themselves out!!* This seemed to be a new idea to them, and they wondered how it could be.

This brought to mind those sycophantic dedications of books to some great lord, which I used to read with disgust when a child.

This conversation I have detailed solely in illustration of the mechanism of society here, and the illustration is equally forcible whether the facts in the case mentioned are authentic or otherwise: I have, however, no reason to doubt their authenticity.

And it shows truthfully how passive the lower orders are under the influences which fall upon them from above—how they are led along by those influences, and kept down or elevated by them at pleasure.

Those are exceedingly gentle influences, and yet how omnipotent in the skilful hand! They create and they destroy; they give omnipotence to caste, and yet, when occasion requires that certain plebeians should be brought out and brought up, they destroy that very omnipotence to make way for them; and what is wonderful, it remains in full force after all, as though no breach had been made.

Those who are so fortunate as to be brought out, regard themselves as having been created anew, and rise to the enjoyment of their new life with hearts full of devotion to their creators; and that is what it is for, their services are wanted.

Peel was an illustrious exception. After having been brought out himself, he did what he could to bring out his fellow-plebeians, by delivering them from all the burdens which he had strength to remove, regardless alike of the favor and the frowns of the mighty ones who had lifted him up; for he became mightier than all of them put together. But one such man is enough for an age.

Occasionally there comes up one from the common ranks under these patronizing influences, upon whose head, as a reward for his fidelity to his masters, titles are shed down; and such sometimes find their way even into the peerage; and to them I have often been proudly pointed as an evidence that British institutions, after all, are not so very depressing in their influences upon the people.

The following considerations will enable us duly to appreciate this matter. In the first place, as I have shown, those who thus rise are necessarily the creatures of the dignitaries by whose "gracious" assistance they have crawled up, and to whose interests they are regarded as forever chained.

In the next place, it is to be considered that the titled ranks above are constantly being thinned by the extinction of families, as I have shown. This extinction of families results, undoubtedly, from the general profligacy of the higher orders; but the vacancies thus made must be filled up, or the whole system of government will come to an end. And whence but from the orders below can the material for this purpose be drawn? And how admirably fitted to chime in with such a system of things, and to shine as gems in it, are those who have thus been "brought out!"

Almost all the talent in the House of Lords is confined to those who have been "brought out," and lifted up, or to their immediate descendants. And thus while the number in it is kept good, it is preserved from absolute contempt for its imbecility.

There are none among the English aristocracy so tyrannical and oppressive, none so exclusive, none who have so much iron in their backs, and are so unapproachable, and none who set themselves so resolutely against every movement of reform, as this very class. When the proposition was made for abolishing in part the general hanging system, who were among the stoutest defenders of this more than barbarous outrage upon humanity and common sense? They were such men as Lord Eldon, the Lord Chancellor and Lord Chief Justice of England, who had himself been "brought out" and made what he was by the process I have described. And who were so bitter in their opposition to "the Rotten-borough Act," and to the repeal of the corn-laws, as those who had themselves been thus brought out, and created anew?

And the fact, that such is the effect upon poor English human nature, shows conclusively the rarity of the thing. So wonderful a thing is it for the common people to rise to conspicuous stations here, that when they *are* lifted to such positions, and crowned with titles, which they have regarded from their infancy up, as *reserved* for "a superior order of beings," the effect is precisely what, under the same circumstances, may be predicated of our common humanity—they are spoiled.

But, as I said, the effect proves that the thing is rare; and why is it that no such effect follows from the elevation of our own people to high and honorable positions? I say *no such* effect; sudden elevations, it is true, sometimes make people a little giddy in our country, but they are soon laughed out of it, so that no evil results to our people.

So entirely accessible to every class in our country are the most honorable positions in society, so *broad* is the way that leads to them, and so constantly is it thronged by those who are pressing their way up from below, that the very *commonness* of the thing operates as an antidote to the evil which would otherwise result.

And this is one of the arguments for hereditary royalty, and a hereditary aristocracy here, that those who are born to such stations are not near as apt to run into the extremes of a rigorous despotism, as those who have had their brains turned by being elevated from the masses.

And this is the very thing which gives stability to our republic, that our people are born to the high prerogatives of sovereigns, that they are educated with a special view to their responsibilities as such, and that they grow up in the full expectation that they will hold the reins of government, either personally or by proxy—a thought which required a new world to give it birth, and afford scope for its exemplification.

Nothing more forcibly shows the power of the influence I am speaking of, upon all the orders below, than the effect it has had upon most of the reformers, who, from time to time, have lifted up their voices against the abuses of the government,

and in behalf of the rights of the people. With few exceptions, those voices have been silenced by bribes, in the form of place or an empty title. It was but lately announced in the government organ, that a new batch of Baronets was about to be created, and that among them were to be included "several leading liberals who had supported important measures of government"—rather barefaced, I should think.

To be able to appreciate the power of appliances like these, and the moral strength necessary to resist them, one must come here and witness the idolatrous regard of this people for such things, and the almost unearthly consequence thus bestowed upon the favored ones in their eyes. The heaven which Mohammed offered his followers was not half so tempting, for it was hid from mortal vision; but this hangs out its clustering sweets in full view; and true as the needle to the pole, must be the man to his principles, who can resist the temptation.

Suppose a reformer appears in parliament, and lifts up his voice against the abuses of the government; limited and feeble is the appreciation he gets from the people, so submissive and spiritless have most of them become under their burdens; and he has no common interest in their elevation, nor have they any rewards to give, while, on the other hand, that most tempting of all earthly delights, viz., "to wriggle as a joint in the tail of the aristocracy," thrusts its enchantments upon him, and he yields to the spell.

Is it not manifest then, that this government is a prodigy of wisdom and skill, as a piece of mechanism adapted to the weaknesses of humanity, appealing in the one case to the

idolatrous regard of the multitude, and in the other, casting its meshes around the man who should attempt to break the spell that holds them?

When we pause and reflect, that such substantially had been the character of every government, whether nominally republican or monarchical, which had ever existed on the globe previously to the establishment of our own, how almost like a miracle does it seem, that our forefathers should have been preserved from the same fatal error? What a wonderful elevation of character above the common weaknesses, and I may add, obliquities of humanity, do they present?

How little do our people, generally, appreciate their own institutions? Little do they know how highly they are favored over the people of every other country under heaven! It is not that the scattered rays from all the centuries of the past, had converged to illuminate our ancestors, and guide them to the great result; it is not that they had gathered a fragment here, and a fragment there, from the ruins of bygone ages, or copied from the modern governments of the earth the features most unexceptionable in each, after which to form a model to work by, and in accordance with which our government arose in all its majesty, beauty, and proportion. No; there was nothing in all the centuries of the past to be culled, no ray of light from its darkness, save from the rocks on which all pre-existing governments had split; and, thanks be to Heaven, the modern tyrannies of earth were not asked for their contributions.

There seems something almost supernatural and divine

in the origination of such a government as this, at such an era of the world, springing into existence as it did, not the slow growth of centuries, but the work of yesterday, standing forth in all its perfection at once, and in glorious contrariety to any thing the world had ever seen before. Was it not wonderful? And does it not exhibit traces of a higher wisdom, and a higher purpose than man's?

And how do our thoughts revert to the little company in a frail bark, weighing anchor, and taking their departure from these shores; committing themselves, "at an inclement season of the year," to the protection of Him "who holds the winds in His fist," and directing their course, amid danger, to an inhospitable land! What if they had been lost? What if they had been foundered upon the banks? What if they had been dashed upon breakers, or gone to the bottom in a storm? O, what if they had? Then such a wonder as our government presents—such a spectacle as that of a free and happy people, sitting under its shadow, secure from the galling burdens of the oppressor, might never have arisen upon the race, and darkness, tyranny and oppression, have still borne sway over all the earth.

Thanks to that providence which guided the little band in safety to our shores; precious was the burden with which the honored little craft arrived at Plymouth rock. What seeds were planted by them in the virgin soil of the new world; and what a harvest has sprung up! And where did they get them to plant? In what country? In no country on the globe, for in none had such fruits ever been borne.

Where then did they come from? Fruitless question! Depth without a bottom! Mystery without a key!*

Struck into existence, almost as the earth rolled from the forming hand of the Creator, our government stands a great anomaly, a beacon light to the oppressed of all nations, and a terror to the tyrants of the earth.

*England's great historian, Hume, has these remarkable words: "The precious sparks of liberty had been kindled and preserved by the Puritans alone; to this sect, whose principles were so frivolous, and habits so ridiculous, the English owe the whole freedom of their constitution."

To that same sect, so "frivolous in principle, and ridiculous in habit," to whom England is thus acknowledged to be indebted for the semblance of liberty she enjoys, *we* are indebted for the reality. But this does not unlock the mystery.

CHAPTER XXVII.

INDICATIONS OF CHANGE — DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THIS GOVERNMENT AND THE CONTINENTAL GOVERNMENTS — DIFFERENCE IN THE CONDITION OF THE PEOPLE.

As I said, chopping off heads has given place to other appliances, more in accordance with the spirit of the times, and this shows that there has been progress.

A committee of the House of Commons, recently put the following question to the distinguished political economist, John Stuart Mill, viz.; "Do you think there is any thing in the present tone and temper of the working classes, which would make it now desirable to give attention to this subject?"

To which Mr. Mill replies, "I think there is at this moment, more than ever before, and there is likely to be more and more a feeling, on their part, against all the inequalities which exist in society. There is a growing feeling of that kind, and the only way to mitigate it, is to remove all the inequalities that can be removed, without creating preponderating disadvantages."

And more than this, an intelligent commoner remarked to me the other day, that it was his opinion, and that of many others, that Queen Victoria was the last sovereign

England would ever have, adding, that she belonged to a long-lived family, which would probably put off the new era for some time, but that the way would be fully prepared in the mean time.

I am convinced, however, that these sentiments are confined to comparatively few, and that, although there is progress, it is too slow to authorize any such expectation as that, and besides, it is a kind of progress which does not, to any great extent, impair the reverence of the masses for titled show—and that it is, which has always kept them in bondage.

Formerly, this titled show accomplished its objects, as I have said, in part by terror; but now, almost entirely by blandishments. Were the nobility here to stiffen themselves up *in defiance*, as formerly, it would set the whole kingdom in a blaze, and the government would be revolutionized at once. This they know very well, and hence they have set themselves to a new game, and they have learned to play it to perfection. They make it a point to study the character and temper of the people, and take care not to let their restiveness under their burdens, and their fear of starvation, get the better of their veneration for, and their love of show in their "superiors." And they know too, that very small favors, "graciously" bestowed, suffice to reconcile the people to very grievous burdens which remain untouched; and that such is their hold upon their superstitious regards, that when they have galled and chafed them to desperation by their oppressions, they have only to hold up a little, or shift the burden from one shoulder to the other, to quiet all uneasiness,

conciliate all ill feeling, heal all differences, and restore all harmonies.

And they are constantly watching the indications of feeling in the masses below, with a view to adapt themselves to coming emergencies, by concessions in advance—concessions, it may be, of so trifling a character, as not to deserve the name of relief, but, nevertheless, showing such a vast amount of "gracious condescension," as to be remembered for half a century as an act of most paternal regard.

It is after this fashion, and at this pace, that revolution is going on here at present. It is by letting out the cable, inch by inch, that the ship of state is held to its anchorage, and there is cordage enough yet to spare, to put off the final catastrophe, "at the end of the rope," a long time to come.

But after how different a fashion do they do things across the channel, where they can set "the revolutionary cauldron" to boiling any time in ten minutes, and they do not ask more than half an hour to kick the government out of doors.

There, little regard is had to the temper of the people, and no concessions are made to conciliate them. The clamor of the multitude, on the one hand, only begets stern resistance on the other, and the consequence is, violent outbreaks, bloodshed, scampering of kings, and revolution, which generally maintains its position only till the next flow of the tide.

The reason of this difference is to be found in the fact I have already mentioned, that no country in Europe can boast of such a powerful aristocracy as England. Upon the con-

tinent, the aristocracy are, for the most part, shorn of all political power, their titles being little more than an empty name; and besides, they are generally in moderate circumstances, and can make but little figure in the way of parade and show. I have often heard Englishmen speak of them with contempt, as compared with their own powerful nobility. The consequence is, that there is no such stupid veneration among the masses for the higher orders upon the continent, as is to be found in England, nor is it to them that they look for relief from their burdens. *There*, the contest is with the reigning dynasty, which regards every concession as a step towards its downfall, and guards its prerogatives with an ever-wakeful eye.

But that the agricultural laborers upon the Continent are many *pegs* above the corresponding class in England, is sufficiently manifest from the general prevalence of socialism among them—which, though it savors of wildness and extravagance, such as flits upon indistinct vision, nevertheless, shows *wakefulness* and *spirit*, which you may look for in vain among the stupid beings of the same class here—the instance of it I mentioned, being the only one I have heard of in the kingdom.

This then is the difference, that upon the Continent, there is *more* wakefulness and spirit among the people, but a sterner resistance, and that resistance from the great central power; while here, there is *less* wakefulness, and very *little* resistance, and that little from the paltry chiefs, whose ancestors were inaugurated into their places by William the Conqueror, and who have borrowed the magic spell with which

they hold this people to their fealty, from the dark ages of history. Superadded to it, however, is the appliance of which I am speaking, which is only a new adaptation.

I am not going to contend, that the continental nations are in advance of England, but I beg leave to suggest some considerations, which should go far to modify the views of some of our people.

All will agree, that the breaking up of the paltry feudal dynasties, which converted all Europe into one vast scene of petty strife, robbery and blood, in the dark ages, and their consolidation into the large kingdoms which arose upon their ruins was a great step in the earth's progress.

But while in the more enlightened continental nations scarcely a vestige of the feudal despotism was left, in England it remains under a modified form, but in all its power to this day. What are its modifications, and new adaptations, and how fatally the same are its effects upon the masses, I have already shown.

It is true that England has a constitution, and that scenes of feudal carnage and blood have ceased. But that constitution is such as I have described,—altogether feudal in its character; and those scenes of carnage and blood have been followed by an inertnesss among the masses, which prepares them to submit, if possible, still more tamely to the oppressions which are heaped upon them.

But does not every Englishman enjoy the protection of law, the privilege of *habeas corpus*, and of trial by jury? *Yes;* but what signifies the protection of law to the man who has nothing and can get nothing to protect?—or the

habeas corpus act to him who fares better in prison than as "a free-born Englishman" out of it? or the privilege of trial by jury, when transportation at the government charge is a desirable event to him? *

These questions involve no figments of the imagination —would to Heaven they did, and that the scenes which have come under my own observation, and out of which they have arisen, had no existence. Would that I could forget them all, and that, seeing nothing but justice, equal rights, comfort and enjoyment here, I could report the joyful tidings to my countrymen. But fidelity to truth, to conscience, to humanity, and to God, forbids.

To what then does the boasted triumph of the feudal barons over old King John amount? To what does the famous *Magna Charta*, which was the fruit of that triumph, and about which British historians have made such a flourish, as the citadel of the rights of Englishmen, under which the humblest and most down-trodden of them all may claim the protection of law, the privilege of *habeas corpus*, and the right of trial by jury—to what does it all amount, so far as the masses are concerned, as a remedy for the evils which are vital in the organic structure of the government, and which press them into the earth now, as they did centuries ago?

* It is true, indeed, that Englishmen are exempt from liability to those secret imprisonments which are sometimes resorted to by some of the continental governments, which is certainly so far an advantage. It is also true that the liberty of the press and of speech is more fully enjoyed in England than in most countries upon the Continent.

That was a noble triumph, and might have been a proud feather in England's cap, but for the fact, that it is an adjunct of a system which, as a whole, is so vicious that even its salutary provisions are nearly powerless for good to the great mass of the people. Little credit indeed is due to the barons of England—O how little !—when it is considered, that they have managed, even under the broad provisions of *Magna Charta*, to keep the whole loaf to themselves, and have left the people to the mere crumbs which fall from their table !

Such are the conservators of this government; and, as I have shown, they maintain their power as some wise women do over their husbands, by only *seeming* to yield—idolatry does the rest.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

CLAIM TO "SIMILARITY OF INSTITUTIONS" PREMATURE.

I HAVE spoken of the regimental display of English farm-laborers as constituting one of the chief wonders at the Crystal Palace, at the time of the Great Exhibition here last year, and have given an instance of it.

Another demonstration of the same kind transpired which is deserving of notice. I had just been poring over the cogitations of a London pamphleteer, who had taken it in hand to set forth the things which he had seen and heard, and which he verily believed; and foremost among them loomed up the averment, that "the United States of America is a vigorous young England, *with similar habits, customs, and institutions.*"

Well, thought I, as I looked upon the regimental display before me, here is a poser to that. How to reconcile this spectacle with the idea of *similarity* in the institutions of the two countries, was a puzzler to me.

But as I love to have them tell their own story when they will, instead of giving my own version of the matter, I will cheerfully step aside and let the "Times" speak.

Says that oracle, in giving an account of the demonstra-

tion in question: "A most interesting spectacle was witnessed at the Grand Exhibition yesterday. Nearly eight hundred laborers and country folks, from the neighborhood of Godstone, Savoy, made their appearance at the Crystal Palace, in marching order, like a regiment of soldiers, under their leader, the clergyman of the parish. The men paid one shilling and sixpence towards the expenses of the trip, the remainder being paid by the gentry in the neighborhood. They were as perfect a specimen of rustic attire, rustic manners, and rustic faces, as could be found in England, and bore the marks of a laborious life, little relieved by intelligence and education. As they were about to leave, the town folks gathered around them, and from curiosity, not unmingled with pity, asked them many questions;—how they liked the Exhibition? whether they wanted to come again? and whether they had understood what they had seen?"

Here are three distinct classes of persons introduced upon the stage, separated as widely from each other socially, as though they were inhabitants of different planets, and quite as widely in condition, viz., "the town folks," "the gentry," and "the farm laborers." Let us see whether the institutions of our country have produced any such parallel to either, as to justify the above claim to *similarity* of institutions.

The first thing that strikes us, is the simplicity of "the town folks," and their ignorance of every thing outside their own particular employments. Had these "country folks" alighted upon Hyde Park from some other orb, they could not have been objects of greater curiosity; for these Lon-

doners had not the slightest conception that such beings existed in the kingdom. The appearance of a company of Ojibways, or Blackfoots, or Flat-heads even, in our cities, would not draw forth such expressions of wonder from our people. And where is the class of men in all our broad country who would be gazed upon with the slightest feeling of curiosity by any of our people?

And so it is; the shopkeepers and others in the towns, too generally, just understand their own business, and nothing else. I have often travelled from shop to shop in London in vain, to get information upon subjects upon which every school-boy in our country would be supposed to be familiar; and they would fairly stare at me with surprise that I should expect them to understand such things.

In his own particular sphere, each one is an adept, and as perfect as he can be made, whether he be laborer, servant, tradesman, mechanic, professional man, gentleman, or statesman. At home in their own particular calling, they can be taught nothing which is known in the kingdom. But outside of that, as a general thing, the mind is a blank. Exceptions there are in every department; but they are not numerous enough to invalidate the general rule. And what parallel to this can be found in our country, where every man is supposed to be possessed of a stock of general information? Not that we have no dark minds on general subjects; but with us these are the exceptions, and do not impair the general fact.

And what parallel can be found in our country to "*the gentry*," who so graciously paid the expenses of these poor

creatures to the Exhibition? We have, it is true, a class which bear some marks of resemblance to them. Do your thoughts recur to the wealthy among us as furnishing the parallel? No, no, they are not the ones—there is no parallel here. A life of idleness and pleasure, and a contempt of both toil and the toiler, are the great distinctive features of the class. But our wealthiest men are generally our busiest, and are the very first to put honor upon labor, both by precept and example. So entirely is labor in the ascendant in our country, that if here and there one fancies himself rich enough to withdraw from the field to enjoy himself in retiracy, she places him under the ban, and he loses all consideration in society; and generally he rushes back into business again for relief, in part from the penalty thus imposed, and in part to escape from his ennui. But how different from all this is the case with these idlers. *Labor!* Why, it is a stench in their nostrils; and besides, they could take no readier way to forfeit the respect, and lose their hold upon the reverence of the orders below, than to put their hands to some useful employment.

And furthermore, it is essential to the parallel, that the class in question should exert a depressing influence upon all below; should erect impassable barriers to rising progress, and keep down aspiring energy. But so far from this, the entire influence of the wealthy among us, is to elevate rather than depress, to nerve honest industry, and quicken its efforts to rise, both by its example, and by the rewards it bestows. Local exceptions there may be, and are; but, as a general thing, the class of whom I am speaking, so divide the profits

of every enterprise, as to enable those in their employment to rise to competence and comfort, and from that they often mount to wealth and distinction.

I have sometimes been told by those who crawl at the feet of their superiors here, that we have about the same distinctions in our own country, only there is not quite so much formality about them; and I doubt not there are some of our own people who would be inclined to sympathize with this view of the subject; but if we have any such among us, they have only to come here to get cured of all that.

That we have upstarts in our country, whose heads are turned by a sudden flush of prosperity, is true enough; but that has no bearing upon the case. Suppose they barricade themselves to the utmost, and stiffen themselves as with a crowbar in their backs, to what does it all amount? What are all their defences around about but a spider's web, which the first breath of adversity may blow away, and which is constantly being brushed aside by those who are pushing their way up from below?

What resemblance is there in all this, to the castes here, fortified and shielded against assault by the constitution of the country—by the laws of entail and primogeniture? Why, a man may forfeit character, and every thing he has power to sacrifice, and sink himself in the brute, and not be able to sacrifice the dignity of rank; and the defences of privilege now, are the same they were centuries ago. So long then as the British constitution stands, so long will British caste maintain its power.

I have often said to them here, that we have no more

distinctions in society among us, than are necessary to keep up a wholesome spirit of emulation, and of progress. Taking the world as it is, and not as it should be, I hesitate not to affirm, that, if there were no distinctions in society, we should all sink to pretty nearly one common level of inactivity, with a strong proclivity to listlessness and vice, just as certainly as though pressed down by the incubus of a superincumbent aristocracy; those who doubt it, have yet to take their first lessons in human nature.

Again, it is essential to the parallel, that the order in question should exert, not only a depressing, but a *corrupting* influence, upon all below. I do not mean the corruption to which the lower orders would naturally be prone, from listless inactivity; but that overwhelming tide which titled idleness, and titled profligacy, pour down upon all below. Who so unskilled in human nature, as not to know that idleness is prone to profligacy and to mischief, as the sparks to fly upwards; and when the idler is invested with the spell of rank, and is reverenced as a demi-god, even in his profligacy, who can set bounds to the mischief he is capable of perpetrating? As an instance, a "noble Lord" was recently prosecuted by another "noble Lord," for affixing his name to disreputable letters, sent to ladies of distinction throughout the kingdom, fifty of these letters having been deposited in the post-office at a single time, as proved. But I am opening a sluice here which I did not intend, and will shut the gate where I am, for there would be no end to the deluge of pollution to come through it. Suffice it to say, that our wealthy men, as a general thing, have other matters to occupy their attention.

No, no, the wealthy among us are not the ones to furnish the parallel to the labor-despising gentry of this kingdom; nor do I know that any parallel can be found. We have but one order of men in our country who despise labor, and live upon the sweat and toil of the million; I refer to the gentry who are found at our hotels, and who have the reputation of "living by their wits." But they are hardly numerous enough to constitute a class, nor do they furnish points of resemblance enough to the strolling orders here, to constitute a fair parallel.

But this much may be said, that idlers of all nations, of whatever name, character, or standing, are a curse to their country. They add nothing to the public resources, consuming only what others produce, and that without rendering an equivalent; they exert a corrupting influence upon all around them, and are a burden alike to community, and to themselves. All the industrial classes have their spheres of usefulness, some greater, and some smaller; but all, like the wheels of a machine, work in harmony, each being equally necessary to the perfection of the whole. But in all this, there is no place for the idler; and so far as he finds place, he is only a clog, and throws every thing into confusion and ruin; no, not always both *confusion* and *ruin*, for here they have the ruin without the confusion; systematic ruin; venerable ruin; ruin baptized in the name of the constitution of the country, and hoary with age, by reason of their having originally introduced this useless order of beings into the very mechanism of the government.

What similarity then is there here in the institutions of the two countries?

And thanks be to that overruling Providence which guided the pilgrim fathers to our shores, neither have we any class in our country, which furnishes a parallel to the famous regiment of eight hundred above spoken of. Laboring men of my country! what say you to these things? Is there any parallel here? What would you think of having your expenses paid for you to a Great Exhibition of the Works of Industry of all Nations, there to appear in marching order, with little bits of red ribbon upon your hats—*for a show?* And what would you think to have "the town folks crowding around you, and staring at you as a spectacle of curiosity; looking upon you with feelings of "pity," and asking you, "*whether you wanted to come again?*" What say you to such catechizing as that—catechizing which a child eight years old in our country would resent?

Is it not the pride, the glory, and the strength of our institutions, that they rest for support upon the working men of our country, and especially upon our rural population; who are a lifeguard around about them; while these people are quite content to be relieved of all such burdens?

Tell me, then, where is the parallel to be found? Does not like produce like? And if there be likeness in the institutions of the two countries, would there not be likeness in the fruits they bear, in the results they work out?

CHAPTER XXIX.

CONTRAST IN THE INSTITUTIONS OF THE TWO COUNTRIES.

"Ho! there is very little difference in the institutions of the two countries; you have your President, and we our Queen; you a Senate, and we a House of Lords; you a House of Representatives, and we a House of Commons," said an intelligent Englishman to me the other day; and there are not wanting those in our own country who are inclined to sympathize with this view of the subject.

How far this claim to *similarity of institutions* is founded in truth, may be judged of, to some extent, from facts which I have already given. It were quite sufficient, one would think, to point to the opposite effects produced by the institutions of the two countries, to settle the question.

But let us draw near and examine the structure of this government a little; let us explore the sources whence all this misery flows, and see if we can find any thing in our own government which corresponds to it.

And let us commence with the great ruling branch of the government, the aristocratic, and what analogy do we find here? Originally, a greater part of the lands in the kingdom were parcelled out among a few military chiefs by

a victorious adventurer; those chiefs were made lords, and erected into a branch of the government for the protection of their own separate and independent interests thus acquired—interests which rise up in monstrous antagonism to the rights of the people. And what analogy is there in all this to the American Senate? Have our senators any distinct and independent interest of their own to assert and maintain? Nay, are they not ultimately as much the representatives and servants of the people as the members of the lower House?

Is it said, that while the House of Lords are thus elevated into a branch of the government to look to their own independent interests, they are also designed to subserve the interests of the people, as a barrier to the encroachments of the crown. And what advantage is it to the people, pray, to be trampled into the dust by the lords, to save them from being thus trampled down by the monarch?

And here I undertake to affirm, that a degraded peasantry is as much a part of the constitution of the country, and belong as much to the aristocratic branch of it, as that branch does to the government itself, and is as necessary to its existence; and *that*, notwithstanding all that is said about their being "free-born Englishmen," in the full enjoyment of their rights, "under the broad shield of *Magna Charta*."

"The Times," in an able editorial, appealing to the lords in behalf of the peasantry, tells them that the comfortable subsistence of the latter is identified with their own interests, and adds, "a lord without a peasantry is a contradiction in terms."

Again, in an equally able editorial, it says, "The British government is based upon the supposition of three distinct classes—an upper, wealthy, exclusive, and powerful; a lower, numerous, ignorant, degraded, and manageable; and a middle, struggling to detach itself from the latter, and attach itself to the former."

And never was more truth uttered in as many words. And what is this but an open avowal that a degraded peasantry is an essential element in the constitution of the country? To what does it amount to tell us that there is no law to keep them where they are, admitted as it is, and must be, that, law or no law, they cannot rise from their degraded condition without upsetting the constitution of the country, and that so long as the British constitution stands, so long they must remain where they are?

There is nothing then but contrast here. Nor is the House of Commons scarcely less a contrast to our House of Representatives. The members of both Houses of Parliament are alike the great landholders and millionaires of the kingdom.* The only difference between them is, that those

* Says Porter, (vol. 3, p. 30,) "Every member of the House of Lords, with scarcely an exception, draws his revenue from land, and an overwhelming majority of the House of Commons are similarly circumstanced."

Mr. McGregor, a prominent member of Parliament, from Glasgow, and author of the great statistical work on England and America, says, that, previous to the passage of the Reform Act in '32, the oppressive measures of government had generally been carried by the corruption of the House of Commons; but it is not easily seen

of the upper House are titled as peers, and their seats are hereditary, while those of the lower are not thus titled, and they are elected once in seven years; but to be eligible, they must have an annual income from landed estate of $3000, and they are voted into their places only by the few who have the required property qualification. Labor, with its millions, has never yet had a representative in the British Parliament; overgrown wealth alone has found place there, while labor has been left alone in its want, voiceless in respect to its own rights, a mere appendage to those whose interests are represented and cared for.

how they needed any *special* corruption, since their interests and those of the lords are, in a manner, identical.

Speaking of the representation in the Commons previous to the Reform Act of '32, Mr. McG. says, "Sixty-five rotten boroughs sent 130 members, to vote generally for the minister of the day, which now, from their insignificance and former corruption, deservedly send none." He adds, that "twenty-two which now send two each, (including Manchester, Leeds, and Sheffield,) were unrepresented," and that "Scotland was one great rotten borough, entirely at the disposal of the ministers of the crown."

But he does not tell us that from all this reform the mass of the people have gained nothing. Far better is it to have rotten borough members who will vote with "the minister of the day," than to have their places filled by those who are certain to array themselves against all reform; for that "minister of the day" may chance to be a Sir Robert Peel, while at the worst, he could only be a scourge to wake up the sleeping masses, and bring them out for reform.

Mr. McGregor says further, that there are still remaining *sixty-seven* rotten boroughs represented, acknowledged to be such by the *Premier*, Lord John Russell.

But did not the people have a House of Commons that passed "the rotten borough act" of '32, by which a large number of members elected, each by the influence of the Minister, were thrown out, and a House of Commons that repealed the Corn-laws? No more than they had a House of Lords that did, for both alike stood out against those measures to the last extremity, and both alike yielded only because they must. It must sound strange in the ears of our people, to be told, that both of those great measures were carried by a House of Commons, elected expressly to uphold them. But such was the fact nevertheless, as I learn from the best authority here. It was the clamor of the starving millions which carried those great measures through Parliament; a clamor which came up into the ears of the two Houses with such terrifying effect, that they dared not resist.

And what a spectacle is here! What an anomaly in legislation, to see those to whom the constitution of the country allows no political existence, actually governing the kingdom, that is, "by fits and starts," or when goaded by hunger, they "take the notion," while the two Houses of Parliament, for the time being, give up their hostility, and enter upon the work of reform at their bidding, the one with the same reluctance as the other.

The clamor being appeased by an acquiescence in all that is asked, these political nullities settle back again into their torpid state; and Parliament, true to its old instincts, goes on with its work, characterized by the same hostility to reform as before, and that in the one House as much as in the other.

"The rotten borough act," although it swept out of Parliament a hundred and thirty members elected to the House of Commons by small boroughs, under the influence of the Minister, (some even from extinct boroughs), did little for the cause of reform after all, for their places were supplied by wealthy aristocrats, many of them of "the tucked up" order, who are still further removed in sympathy from the people, than the Lords themselves. And to this day, no inconsiderable proportion of the House of Commons is composed of "Lords by courtesy;" that is, the younger sons of Lords, whose sympathies have no tendency downward among the people, and the remainder are mostly landlords.

And to crown the climax, the House of Commons must have *a government leader*, who is either the Prime Minister, or the Chancellor of the Exchequer.

And what analogy is there here? Nay, is there any thing but contrast in our House of Representatives to all this?

Another strange anomaly is presented in their basis of representation, which was adjusted in some other age than this, and remains unaltered; the consequence being, that some large cities have either no representatives at all, or but a single one in the House of Commons; while some little, unimportant boroughs, of a few thousand inhabitants, have two. These unrepresented, or but very partially represented cities, are manufacturing towns, which have grown up, to a great extent, within the present century; and I doubt not that the reluctance to readjust the basis of representation, is to be ascribed to the fact, that in these towns the spirit of re-

form is much more prevalent than in any other part of the kingdom.

Where then is the parallel to be found? Is it between the Monarch and our President? Here, too, there is only contrast. What parallel is there between a plain man, with a salary barely sufficient to support him, and little more than advisory powers, (except the negative,) and that for the short term of four years, and the monarch of this realm, born to the sceptre, and surrounded with the "pomp and circumstance" of royalty, having a salary to the amount of two millions of dollars; clothed with power to call and prorogue Parliament at pleasure, to create a batch of peers sufficient to carry any measure, and to dispense titles generally, which are more potent than fleets and armies with this people, who bow down in low worship to the spectres which are thus struck into being at the pleasure of the Sovereign; in whom is also vested the exclusive power of appointment to all offices of trust, civil, judicial and military, *without the concurrence of Parliament;* in whose name, as the proprietor of the kingdom, all suits are prosecuted, and who is at the same time the chief of all the courts of law, the judges being only his substitutes; who, as generalissimo of army and navy, has power to levy troops, equip fleets, build fortresses, &c., without let or hindrance, the only check upon him being that of withholding supplies, an expedient which cannot be resorted to without endangering the very existence of the government; and who is the head of the church, and appoints its bishops and archbishops?

What analogy then is there in the fundamentals of the two

governments? We have seen how heaven-wide asunder they are in respect to the fruits they bear, the effects they produce upon human character, and destiny; and we now see how inevitably it must be so, from the fundamental differences in their very structure.

Wonderful is the influence of a government, for good or for evil; it can create, and it can destroy character—develope it into fair and beautiful proportions, or dwarf it into a mere burlesque of humanity; and when it does the latter, fearful indeed is the account which stands over against it for final adjudication. Sentence may not be speedily executed, but those laws by which nations rise and fall, will not always sleep.

CHAPTER XXX.

ELECTION SCENES IN ENGLAND, A STILL FURTHER INDEX TO THE CHARACTER OF THE GOVERNMENT.

I HAVE passed through an election scene in England, and such a scene! Had the broils and outrages which attended it, characterized an election in our country, the death knell of the republic would have been sounded throughout Europe. Indeed, a London daily had the ingenuousness to say, that "all the disturbances which had attended the general elections of the United States, from the foundation of the government, were not equal to those which had often characterized a single election scene in England."

I used to think we had disgraceful scenes enough at our elections in all conscience, but they have dwindled into *little improprieties*, since I have witnessed the election outrages here.

I have spoken of the monstrous impropriety of filling up the House of Commons with lords "by courtesy," and of the two reasons assigned by a distinguished statesman here for it. Another reason still, I find, is *money*. I learn, on good authority, that one of this class of candidates expended £97,000, or $485,000, almost half a million, to secure a

seat in the House of Commons. Do you ask how it was possible? In the first place, all the public-houses, spirit and ale-houses of the district, thousands perhaps in number, are chartered for the occasion, their doors thrown open, and the foaming bumpers freely distributed. The extent of this enormity may be judged of from a remark of the Times, that it mattered little whether the property qualification act in reference to the candidate were abolished or not, as the first question asked, invariably was, "*will he bleed?*" That is the great secret, the one that will *bleed most*, stands the best chance of success, and in order to that a man must be possessed of an enormous income. And thus it is, that the few who are entitled to a vote, under the enchantments of the flowing bowl, fill up what passes under the false cognomen of a House of Commons, with wealthy aristocrats, whose first and great business it is look to their own interests, and trample down the rights of the people.

There are various other ways in which money is spent upon these occasions, as employing a small army of speakers and agents to traverse the district in every direction, buying up votes, &c., &c. Charges of bribery and corruption are bandied in the newspapers, implicating the highest dignitaries in the land, and what is marvellous to me, to the astonishment of nobody.*

* Since this was written, *thirty* of the newly elected members of Parliament, it is stated, have been unseated, mostly for bribery, which was proved to have been of the most flagrant character, implicating both parties, and persons of the highest standing. In addition to these, there are stated to be a great number of other

I will give one or two instances of the rough-and-tumble scenes in which the canvassing candidates play their part. Sir James Graham, one of the most distinguished political characters in the kingdom, presented himself to make a speech as a candidate, before an assembled multitude in Cumberland, but was interrupted at the very outset, by a lawyer who stood directly before him, and who bawled out, "Knock that man down (referring to Sir James), *knock him down*, he shall not say such things here."

Major Beresford, a sprig of nobility, I believe, rose to address a mixed multitude as a candidate, when, upon hearing some expressions of dissatisfaction in the crowd, he drew himself up, and looking down upon them with ineffable scorn, exclaimed, "*You are the vilest rabble I ever saw!*" And yet, after all, such was the spell which radiated from his title and rank upon the servile multitude, that they actually *cowed* under it.

These are but gentler specimens. Time would fail me to enumerate all the scenes of uproar, of bullying, violence, and blood (to say nothing of the wholesale slaughter in Ireland), which disgraced this single election, in a country which boasts of its free institutions as the model of our own.

There are two causes which operate to aggravate these evils. First, the *unfrequency* of the elections operates largely in this direction, the elections being *seven years asunder*. It is partly upon the principle that the prize is valued in proportion

cases, which had to be passed over for want of definite testimony, although there was no reasonable doubt, that they involved similar corruption.

to its *rarity*, and is striven for with corresponding desperation, and partly from a disposition in the multitude to indemnify themselves for so long an interval of political stagnation, associated with the idea of the extraordinary *uncommonness* of the occasion, that much of this turmoil is to be accounted for.

But a still more fruitful cause of it, I apprehend, is the exclusion of the great mass of the people from the privilege of voting. It was stated at a public meeting here, that there are over five millions of adult males in the kingdom who are denied the right of suffrage because they are poor. Here then are five million men lying passively down under a grievance, which stirred the blood and nerved the arms of our revolutionary fathers, viz., "*taxation without representation*," the tax on what they consume being five-fold greater than was ever imposed upon the patriots of '76.

There cannot be, according to census returns, over six millions of adult males in the kingdom, so that there are about five of these political nullities to *one political man*, and what wonder is it, that when they get collected in masses about the speaker's stump, or the polls, they should participate in the excitement of the occasion, and make their power felt in the only form at their command? I have said in another connection, that the terrors they inspire have carried all the great measures of reform through Parliament, ciphers as they are, exhibiting, as I have said, the anomaly of a kingdom governed by those of whose political existence it otherwise knows nothing.*

* "And why should they want to vote? They have no interest at stake," said a wealthy aristocrat to me lately. Indeed,

It requires but a glance at the mechanism of society here, and the manner of its operation at these septennial elections, to initiate one pretty fully into the mysteries of that sham concern called the House of Commons. I have, in another place, spoken of the great moneyed interest of which it is made up, and for whose defence it is set. Let us now see how the claims of rival candidates are sustained at the polls; between whom, by the way, there is very little choice, so far as the rights of the people are concerned.

Take two facts: *first*, that the votes are given in *vive voce*, so that it may readily be known how every man votes; and, *second*, that nearly all the voters in the kingdom are pecuniarily dependent upon some great one above them, and that all have besides a vast amount of reverence for "*their superiors*;" and how manifest is it, that all the votes in the kingdom must be controlled by a few men?

The farmer is a mere appendage to the landlord, so far as his political existence is concerned, and he is always expected to follow in his lead. Such a thing as an independent yeomanry, jealous of encroachment upon their rights,

said I, is it nothing to them, that the tax on what they consume deprives them of the means of comfortable subsistence? And, I might have added, is it nothing to them, that the way upward to competence and comfort is effectually closed against them? Is it nothing to them, that while they are the protectors of the country over whose dead bodies a foreign foe must pass to get a foothold in its borders, and while they earn all the wealth of the country, —is it nothing to them, that others reap all the benefit of the protection they afford, and the wealth they earn?

and who know how to defend them, is not known in England, nor does a farmer, whatever be his wealth and intelligence, ever aspire to political honors. Fidelity to his liege lord is the great point of honor with him, and, in his excessive amiableness, he only needs to know his will to be prompt to fulfil it. Nor is this a spurious matter; he is sincere in his devotion. Exceptions there may be, but I have never heard of one.

The great manufacturers of the kingdom equally control all their dependents, or the few of them who are entitled to the right of suffrage. The operative dare not vote contrary to the wishes of his employer, for he knows the loss of his place would be the forfeit. And the same with those dependent upon the commercial and other interests.

And these in turn, the great manufacturers, the leading commercial classes, &c., are subjected to the overruling influence of the few greater ones above them all. Take, for example, the great firm of "Minturn & Co." of Stoke, the greatest China ware manufacturers in the world. In passing by steamer from Antwerp to Rotterdam, upon the Scheldt, I met with a minor partner of that concern, and the conversation turning upon politics, an Englishman standing by remarked to him, that he supposed Minturn to be a tory, as the Duchess of Sutherland was a great patroness of his; to which he replied in the affirmative.

Thus it is that one class bows tamely down to another, and all bow down together to the few who control the destinies of the kingdom; and no movement can be made in the direction of reform until the down-trodden masses have been

aroused by the stirring appeals of some master-spirit, to demand a redress of their wrongs in some particular, when something has to be done to pacify them, and they settle back into as profound a slumber as before.

And here I cannot but remark how striking a resemblance, in every essential feature, the existing order of things bears to that of the feudal ages—the mechanism is the same, appliances only being different. Under that ancient system, first stood the lord, then the vassal, whose relative position is now occupied by the tenant farmer; and then the serfs, to whom now correspond the farm laborers; all just as much in subordination the one to the other now, as they were then—all working just as harmoniously as the great wheels and the little wheels of the same piece of mechanism, and all conspiring equally to the one result, and that result the aggrandizement of the few at the expense of the many, only, as I said, the appliances being different. The substance, and the very form of the thing they retain, and that form animated by the same spirit of servility.

And the same form has been copied into the large towns, with the same spirit infused into it. I speak only in general terms, the exceptions not being numerous enough to detract much from their force.

CHAPTER XXXI.

LAW AND JUSTICE IN ENGLAND ILLUSTRATED.

THAT the civil code of English law, is, in its main features, in accordance with the principles of justice, is not to be denied, crooked and labyrynthine as are the highways which lead to the true result, and numerous as are the by-ways which lead off, at every point, into the vast fields of error in which the great interests of justice are too often swamped.

This just and righteous code of English civil law, with certain rather uncomely *appendices*, has answered its purpose very well in this kingdom, which is to give the *color* of right to the most abominable system of oppression the world ever saw, the sturdy pillars of justice every where rising upon the view, to garnish the fabric.

But it is like *stealing the livery of heaven*—to cover an ulcerous carcass, the shame of whose nakedness would otherwise excite loathing and disgust. Under the broad shield of the law, every man, as "a free-born Englishman," is secure against the invasion of his rights. The tenant of the lowly hovel can eat his crust with as much security as the proudest peer can revel in his banqueting halls, Justice standing over them both alike with uplifted shield to protect.

It is not for Justice to trouble herself about matters of state—not for her to pry into the secrets of an organic structure of society, which has operated to throw the different classes of society heaven-wide asunder, and to subject the lower to the necessity of a standing destitution—all this is supposed to be far without the range of her optics, and to be separated from her jurisdiction by an impassable gulf.

The limits of her jurisdiction are all mapped out before her, and she is forbidden, under pain of expulsion from the kingdom, to overstep them. She is to take things as William the Conqueror left them in a semi-barbarous age, and keep them so. To this end she has been empowered to extend just protection enough to the humble poor, to keep them from being starved out and becoming extinct, which would be as great a calamity as to have them rise to circumstances of comfort and respectability; for, in either case, the foundations of society and of the government would be equally taken away, and the entire fabric come down with a crash.

And, after all, what benefit does the working man derive from the protection of law? In all the annals of British oppression, when and *where* was such a thing ever heard of as that a poor farm laborer availed himself of the law to recover his rights or avenge his wrongs? Never, and nowhere. Generally the paltry pittance allowed for his labor is promptly paid; but I have heard of cases where it was withheld, and the poor suffering wretches, instead of turning their eyes to the law for protection, only turned them to the work-house for refuge.

The reason is twofold; in the first place, they are en-

tirely destitute of the means to prosecute their rights, and they are thus met at the threshold with a physical impossibility. In the next place, they have not the *spirit* to do it, if they had the means, which amounts to a moral impossibility. *What!* a farm-laborer standing up in a court of law to vindicate his rights against his oppressor! Why, it would be a spectacle, I had almost said, which would fill all England with alarm for the safety of the institutions of the country.

And these are the "free-born Englishmen" who tread the *soil* of England, under the broad shield of *Magna Charta*—who cannot be hung or transported without a trial by jury, nor be cast into jail (where they would grow fat) without being entitled to the privilege of *habeas corpus*.

But I spoke of certain uncomely *appendices* to the common law of England, in a way which conveyed a hint, that we need not even penetrate beneath the surface to discover very hideous things. Nor need we. It was not enough that the law was powerless for good to the poor starving laborer, and only efficient in protection to his oppressor; *special provisions* must be appended to it, to place the former still more at the mercy of the latter—*provisions* which would disgrace a barbarous age.

Take the game-laws for one example. By the provisions of these laws the landlord's game may overrun and destroy the crops of his tenant, and he not only has no remedy at law, but if he attempts to protect himself by destroying the game, he is liable to imprisonment, and, under certain circumstances, to transportation. Nor have these laws remained

a dead letter upon the statute-book; they have been rigorously enforced, and as the penalty, many an industrious farmer has been sent to Botany Bay, and his family consigned to the workhouse.

Hear them tell their own story. Says a writer in the London Farmers' Magazine, "Well may the Americans, in their exultation on acquiring true liberty, point the finger of scorn to the cultivator of land in England, *who dares not destroy the spoilers of his harvest*, for the act of coercing them from their depredations, is construed into an offence against the game laws, and the *free-born Englishman* is cast into a loathsome prison, and his family sent to the workhouse; and thus *thousands of families* sink to ruin."

The following tragical case, which is only an illustration and confirmation of the above, was related to me on the most undoubted authority. In the near neighborhood of one of those magnificent parks, through which I have rambled with so much delight, a small farmer, who was entirely dependent upon the avails of his crops for the payment of his rent, and the support of his family, established himself. No sooner had his first crop made its appearance above the surface, than it was eaten down and totally destroyed by hundreds of rabbits from the park. He complained and entreated, but in vain. He planted his ground the second time, determined, if possible, to protect himself. He set snares, and thus caught many of the rabbits, but not enough to save his crop. In the mean time, the gamekeeper "got wind" of what was going on, prosecuted the humble tenant farmer, convicted and cast him into prison. And when the poor man had

thus paid the penalty for his offence, and was set at liberty, he was prosecuted again by the inhuman landlord, for the rent of the very land on which his own rabbits had destroyed the crops, and again he was cast into prison, and his family sent to the workhouse. Where, in all the oppressions of earth, can be found greater atrocities than that?

You may call it an extreme case, or call it what you will, it is an example of the atrocities to which every tenant farmer in England is liable, and to which, according to the above authority, *thousands* of them fall victims.

But the other day, it was stated in the papers, that two fine boys, aged twelve and thirteen, were innocently diverting themselves, by putting their hands under the stones in the tail of a mill race, to feel after fish, and enjoying the sport of following them from one retreat to another; and while they were thus engaged in their merry pastime in "merrie England," they were pounced upon by the gamekeeper, hurried before the magistrate, and condemned to a month's imprisonment for an infraction of the game laws.

All over the kingdom there is constant trouble from this source. And then, think of the ship loads who are transported to a convict shore, (after the second or third offence,) for no higher crime than shooting a rabbit, to save themselves and families from starvation; or, it may be, to have a little sport, as well as "their superiors."

If it were not for these things—if, in traversing the country, you could only see stately palaces, and extended pleasure-grounds, variegated and beautified with gardens and parks, running streams and verdant groves, while the wild

game were starting up and flitting away from before you at every step, the whole being rendered doubly attractive by hospitality and good cheer; and if, under the influence of some mysterious spell, the conviction could be wrought, that all these lovely and beautiful things were productive only of comfort and enjoyment, how changed would be the aspect of things upon this island, and what a charm would rest down upon it! But, alas! there breaks unbidden upon the pleasant reverie, the saddening thought, that it is the price of tears and blood; that to support one man in a style of princely ease, hundreds must suffer privation and want, and be liable to be cast into prison, and transported, with the brand of infamy upon them, to the other side of the globe, if they attempt to defend themselves against oppressions that would destroy them.

Often have I paused in silent wonder at these things. Often has the inquiry sat upon my lips, how long can such a state of things continue? No answer to that question has ever yet been uttered by human lips, or entered into the calculations of any human mind.

What seems to us the stupidity of this people in submitting to such things, strikes us with wonder; but the secret of it is, that all their ideas of order, from their infancy up, have been associated with such a state of things. The first idea of order which breaks upon the opening mind of childhood and youth, as it comes echoing down from the powers above, is that the nobility and gentry are the corner-stone on which it rests, and that there could be no such thing as order, if there were no such corner-stone to uphold

it. That is the plain English of the matter. This great first idea "grows with their growth and strengthens with their strength," until they come to look upon the poverty, wretchedness and woe, which follow in the train, as a necessary component part of the most perfect system of order the world ever saw. And if one gets his eyes a little open to the absurdity and folly of this idea, it is as much as his reputation and his peace are worth to avow it, for he is branded at once as an enemy to all order, and a promoter of discord, anarchy, and ruin.

But let us turn our eyes for a moment to the poor victim of the press-gang. See him as he is taking a careless stroll with a lover or sister, pounced upon by the merciless gang, ironed, and forced away, amid screams of agony which should move a heart of stone to sympathy. I have been told of instances of distress thus occasioned of the most heart-rending character—of the terrified victim being torn away, with a sister, lover, brother, father, or mother hanging in frenzy to his arm, screaming in vain for pity, and then sinking senseless to the earth.

And this "free-born Englishman," what had he done? Why was he thus forced away and doomed to years of imprisonment upon a man-of-war, when no crime was laid to his charge?

They say the impressment laws have been modified; but have they been repealed? who will say that? And how can they be modified so as essentially to change their character, without an absolute repeal? Let common sense answer that question. Let the next war answer it.

THE PRESS GANG.

THE ASTOR LIBRARY

Take the laws of seizure, as another instance, or rather the setting aside of all law by a special dispensation in favor of the landlord, to enable him to seize the effects of the tenant, and sacrifice them to the highest bidder, to get his rent, without going through the ordinary process of law. That is taking the pound of flesh in good earnest. The more unfortunate the poor tenant is, the more liable of course he is to be pounced on; and the very implements, or stock, which he has purchased on credit, and not paid for, may be taken, and are often taken, to pay the landlord's rent, which is almost the same thing as taking them from an innocent third party. The enforcement of this landlord's law has contributed not a little to aggravate the distress, and stir up disturbance in Ireland.

A full chapter might have been devoted to the abominations of the sinecure system, by which salaries to the amount of many millions of dollars are paid to officials, most of whom render no service at all, and the remainder only a nominal one. Offices long since abolished, are settled upon persons for life, with salaries of thousands of pounds, the incumbents being sprigs of nobility. And such a scramble is there among them for these places, that often they are bestowed upon expectants one or two lives in advance, leaving the hindermost one to the forlorn hope of coming into possession only upon the contingency of the death of two incumbents before him—one in possession, and another awaiting his death.

I heard it stated in a speech in Exeter Hall, by a liberal member of Parliament, that the Marlborough family is now

in the annual receipt of half a million pounds sterling ($2,500,000) from the post-office revenue—a family which has no connection with that of the great Duke of Marlborough to whom the annuity was originally granted, and which has no claim to it whatever, except the ridiculous one that it occupies the same manor.

The London "Times" stated not long since, that there were a hundred and fifty admirals in the British navy, not *fifteen* of whom could be made available in case of war, and called upon the government, from regard to the public safety, to look to the matter. And it is just so in the subordinate offices of the navy. Midshipmen have often been created before they were a month old, with regular salaries.

And then, to keep up the dignity of the nation, the petty sovereigns on the continent, who happen to have English royal blood in their veins, must have annuities settled upon them by the government. The King of Belgium receives £50,000 annually, the King of Hanover, 30,000, and the Dukes of Schomberg, Mecklenberg, and of the Palatine of Hesse, each a considerable sum. I spoke of this matter to an English gentleman at Marseilles, saying to him, that it looked very strange to me; to which he replied, that he "trusted there was loyalty enough in the British people to pay those annuities without grudging." And so it is; loyalty, *honor*, requires that the mass of the British people should submit to burdens which weigh them to the earth, to support this pensioned tribe.

I have only given an inkling of the iniquity of this system; its abominations cry to heaven against the oppressor,

and fearful is the account which stands over against him for final adjustment.

And now, in view of all these things, in the name of humanity, I ask, what has justice to do in England? what has her (so called) matchless civil code to do, so far as the working classes are concerned, but to uphold, as I said before, one of the most odious systems of oppression the world ever saw? Elude the real point at issue as we will, it comes to this, that the common law of England is not only powerless of protection to the poor man, but is absolutely armed against him, for the special benefit of his oppressors.

CHAPTER XXXII.

THE PUBLIC PRESS USED BY THE ARISTOCRACY TO BLIND THE PEOPLE IN REGARD TO OUR INSTITUTIONS.

THE *public press* here has been made to do good service for the oppressor, the whole periodical press of the country, with few exceptions, bowing itself down to the low and dirty work. This power has been effectually wielded to disparage our country, its institutions, its history, and its people. As a consequence, the grossest ignorance and the most bigoted prejudices pervade large masses of the people here in respect to us.

No falsehoods have been too gross, no caricatures too extravagant to be perpetrated against us by a servile press, insomuch that authors and editors have vied with each other in playing off the foul game upon the people at the bidding of the masters they serve.

And multitudes here have received it all in childlike confidence, as the most undoubted truth. I have been amazed at the ignorance of many of them in relation to our country, and have sometimes smiled in their faces at the ludicrous ideas they entertained. Often have I been asked by otherwise intelligent persons, which was the greatest and most

prosperous country, *Canada or the United States?* And multitudes suppose that mob-law, bowie-knives, and steam-boat explosions are so much the order of the day in our country, that it is as much as one's life is worth to venture amongst us.

And what a vulgar and outlandish set we are! Take the following out of innumerable instances under this head, which have fallen under my observation. Looking into a number of Blackwood's Magazine, I noticed a long article devoted to the review of two books, the contents of which embraced the sage observations of their respective authors, as they passed through our country.

Author number *one* is a *French gentleman.* He takes passage on a North River boat, promenades the deck, until at length he brings himself up standing, when a crowd gather around him, and one of them remarks abruptly, "Why, you have got a *French hat!* I should have known that to be a French hat ten rods off," at the same time stepping up to him, taking the hat unceremoniously from his head, and after examining it, handing it to the next man, and he to the next, and so on till it had passed around the entire circle before it came back to him, he in the mean time standing with the cold wind blowing upon his bare head.

Having recovered his hat, he is next approached by one of the company, who steps close up to him, takes hold of his watch-chain, and after "fumbling" it over awhile, walks leisurely away, without having uttered a word. Another still pursued him to get a trade out of him for his wallet.

Number *two* is a German lady, a countess, forsooth, and

she too takes passage on a North River steamer, and seating herself quietly upon deck, is presently approached by an American lady, who expresses admiration of her scarf, takes hold of it, pulls it off her, and hurries down into the cabin with it. Well, the countess began to be alarmed for her scarf, and while she was cogitating the matter in her own mind, whether it was best to send a messenger after the vanished woman, lo, up she came, scarf in hand, with her husband by her side, and giving her back the scarf, seated her husband right down before her, where he sat and eyed her all over from head to foot, "as though she had been some curious bird."

Who does not see that these are just such exemplifications of manners as one expects to meet with in travelling among savage tribes? And yet such trash is paraded before the British public in that world-renowned magazine, as furnishing a fair example of American manners, and my lords and gentlemen make merry over it, while multitudes in the lower ranks receive it all as law and gospel, and are struck with wonder that we should have been so little affected by the civilizing influences of the Old World.

In the same article is reviewed another book, containing the results of an Englishman's observations in our country (a Mr. Taylor); and from all I could gather, he seems to have acquitted himself well as a discriminating and impartial tourist, and to my surprise, he awarded to our country and its institutions the tribute of his admiration. But, in the eyes of the reviewer, he was evidently a man greatly wanting in judgment and discrimination, and not to be relied on.

After awhile another book of travels came out by a Mr. Casey, embracing the results of his observations during a tour through our country; and equally wonderful to tell, it contained most lucid, candid, and discriminating views of our institutions, and of their bearing upon human weal, together with a true and faithful account of American society and manners, written in a style of great force and beauty.

And what did these slanderers of our country say to that? Well, they said, "Mr. Casey has undertaken to write a book: he has mistaken his calling altogether, and would have appeared much more in character, had he contented himself with some employment which would not have brought him thus prominently before the public."

And this single fling of contempt from these lofty ones, (through a servile press,) will be sufficient to condemn the book in view of nine-tenths of the people of England, and, so far as they are concerned, might just as well never have been written.

Another branch of the profession and calling of the savans of the press, is to rake the kennels of vulgarity among our backwoodsmen, to hunt up expressions which may serve the purpose of raising the laugh against us as an *illiterate* people. "As the Americans say," is the sweeping generality which they use, and with which they make merry at our expense.

These are very modest people; they can taunt us with improprieties of language with wonderful self-complacency, while the fact is notorious, that there are hundreds in these islands who fairly murder "the king's English," where

there is one in our country. Of the 26,000,000 who inhabit these islands, there are not, I am confident, one million who speak the English language with as much propriety as do our commonest people, and the vast majority speak it most barbarously. I have been amazed at the gross improprieties of language which every where grate upon my ear; and all this, to say nothing of the three millions of agricultural laborers, specimens of whose barbarisms I have already given.

The few who are educated, generally speak a uniform language, and, for the most part, with propriety; but when you get below them, there is a perfect jargon of barbarous dialects, insomuch that I often find it difficult to make out their meaning. And what is surprising, the people of ad joining counties often have barbarisms so peculiarly their own that they find it difficult to converse intelligibly with each other, and I have often given up in despair all effort to understand them. For instance, reet for right, neet for night, hy for hay, cowld for cold, howld for hold, owld for old, us for we, we for us, coom for come, soon for sun, nor for than, sin for since, lile for little—these are but a few of the barbarisms constantly to be met with in traversing the country.

These corruptions are confined mostly to the uneducated masses; but all classes agree in taking the letter h from the beginning of a word to which it belongs, and affixing it to a word to which it does not belong; as, the 'osts of Hengland, and so on to the end of the chapter.

There is another species of corruption of language going

on, in which the educated classes take part. I refer to the practice of clipping words. They talk much faster than we do, but that is not sufficient; in galloping to their conclusions, they cut and carve their way with terrible slaughter, sometimes chopping off two-thirds of a word, as, for instance, omnibus, they call *bus*, &c.

There is the word Spital, which has been thus clipped, and no mortal could conjecture what it originally was, unless informed. It is vastly easier to let drop the word Spital, than to go about to say Hospital, as people used to be compelled to do—Spital Fields, now constituting a part of London, used to be Hospital Fields, outside the town.

And thus, while this people, in *action*, go around the corners, as their fathers did centuries ago, and at the same pace, they contrive, in this cross-cutting and galloping way, to outstrip us equally in conversation, at whatever expense of the language.

There are three causes which have contributed to this almost universal corruption of the language (except in the case last named), viz., the general neglect of education, the power of caste, and the local instincts of the people.

In the absence of education, the masses are totally inaccessible to a common literature, which, among a reading people, diffuses itself through every class, and acts as a common instructor, and as the conservator of a common language.

Nor is the power of caste a scarcely less powerful cause of this deplorable result. In our own country, where the way upward in society is so entirely open to all, the orders

below are ambitious to qualify themselves for higher spheres, and have thus a most powerful motive to cultivate the proprieties of speech. But not so here, where ordinarily the lower orders have no hope of rising above the condition in which they were born, and no aspirations to do so ever disturb the even tenor of their humble career; and being cut off from all intercourse with "their superiors," they very naturally fall into these barbarous local dialects.

And to help the matter, they are mostly confined to one locality through life, so that they have little opportunity of comparing notes with each other, though but little removed. I have found more difference in the dialects of two adjoining counties in England, than is to be found in the whole distance from Maine to Florida, and, I may add, from the Atlantic to the Pacific Oceans, in our country; and it is all owing to the operation of these causes.

And yet, with all these gross improprieties of speech, pouring in ceaseless jargon upon their ears, they have the face to taunt us as an *illiterate* people, on account of the few vulgarisms they have been able to rake up. Shame, *shame* upon them!

Highly intelligent men are to be found among both the higher and middle classes in England, but ignorance also has a wide dominion, especially among the latter. As I have before said, I have been amazed at the amount of ignorance among a large proportion of the shopkeepers in London, and throughout England. The truth is, that whatever a boy is put to as an occupation, to that, and nothing else, his attention is kept, as though his very life depended on his devo-

tion to that one thing alone. It is amazing to see how ignorant the mass of the people are of the history of their own country, and even of things pertaining to their own locality. When I was in Bristol, I tried in vain to find out something about Hannah More. I could not even find an individual that had ever heard of her. Of course there must be some people there who knew her personally; but the mass of the people absolutely did not know that one of the most distinguished literary characters in modern times had had her home in the neighborhood. Of course there is a pertness and a species of smartness about shopkeepers every where, but I am now speaking in reference to *general information*. And so it is, to a greater or less extent, among all the industrial classes. As a people, a *whole* people, they are many, *very* many degrees below us in the scale of intelligence.

Under the tuition above noticed, many here have come to regard us as in a rude, uncultivated, rough-and-tumble state, and as but little advanced in the arts of civilization, although they are ready to admit, that a hundred years hence we will begin to be something, if nothing happens to us—that is, provided we can be content to remain in leading-strings to the mother country, and should not be so froward and self-confident as to discard her friendly teachings, and refuse to follow in her wake.

There is a class of petty vulgarities to which some of our people are subject, and which are indiscriminately charged upon us all, to the infinite merriment of these scribblers and their readers. While they maintain a sullen silence on the

subject of the general enlightenment of our people, and the circumstances of comfort with which they are surrounded, they never cease to harp upon these little blemishes, as though they were more than an offset to all the good things we have to show. And what are they? Well, they say our people eat too fast and talk too slow, that they sometimes put their feet upon stoves and mantel-pieces, and squirt tobacco-juice where they ought not to squirt it, and then what a shout of triumph they raise, as though they had thus proved that the education of the people is a bad thing, and the elevation of the race a bad thing, and ignorance, and poverty, and rags, and wretchedness, are good things—not good in themselves, perhaps, but good as the foundation of a system of politeness for the few, of slow-eating and fast-talking, of rightly disposing of the legs, and of the juice of the weed.

God forbid that I should apologize for the tobacco chewer; they may jeer him as much as they please, and they may make all the fun and all the capital they can out of these naughty little practices of our people, and then I will turn upon them, and demand of them in a tone of equal triumph: *Gentlemen*, is this all you have to say in disparagement of our institutions? Laugh on, then, while misery weeps and wails around you—laugh on, if it will do you any good, for with all these glorious advantages on our part, we can afford to be laughed at. With a prosperous and happy country, where honest toil reaps its reward, and competence and comfort are the common lot, we can well afford to be laughed at. Pick up these crumbs of comfort then, if

such they are to you, we will not begrudge them; feed upon them as your daily bread—but this, be it remembered, will not stop the onward march of our country in its career of glory, nor prevent the tides of its influence from surging up upon your shores.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

BRIEF HISTORY OF THE CORN-LAWS, THEIR REPEAL A TERRIBLE BLOW TO LANDLORDISM—POWER PASSING OVER TO OTHER INTERESTS.

THE landed interest governed England previous to the repeal of the corn-laws, and still governs it in the main, it only having been impelled to that step by a spasmodic fit of resistance from the usually passive masses.

A little history of this corn-law protection bill, for the special benefit of the landlords of England, at the expense of the laboring poor, may not be uninteresting, or inappropriate to my design.

That famous bill, usually termed *the sliding scale*, was enacted in 1815, and continued in operation till 1845, a period of thirty years. Its effect was to exclude importations of foreign breadstuffs till they had risen to 80*s*. per quarter, by which means their price was usually doubled in England.

Previous to the enactment of this bill, England had been engaged in an almost uninterrupted succession of wars, usually termed "the French wars," which terminated with the overthrow of Napoleon, embracing a period of 21 years, commencing with 1793.

It was during these wars that the national debt was run up to such an appalling figure. But while they brought financial ruin upon the kingdom, and spread mourning and sorrow, destitution and want, through the habitations of the poor, they brought joy and gladness to the landlords. The products of the soil were doubled in value by the increased demand occasioned by these wars, while the increased burdens they imposed were but an inconsiderable drawback in comparison. Says one of their most distinguished modern writers, "Land rents had risen in a far greater degree than the necessary expenditures of the landlords, notwithstanding the additional burdens of taxation, while the mere laborer still continued to be an eager competitor for employment at the same, or nearly the same wages, as had been given before the wars." And thus matters went on with the landlords and their laborers, during the 21 years continuance of "the French wars."

At the close of the wars, in 1815, or rather, as they were supposed to have been closed, in 1814, the decreased demand for the products of the soil, conspiring with increased production and foreign importation, reduced the price of breadstuffs about one-half, and what a wail of distress then went up from the landlords of England! How could they submit to a corresponding reduction of land rents? How could they brook the idea of reducing their establishments, and adopting a humbler style of living?

So loud and incessant was the cry of *distress* which they poured upon the ear of Parliament, that in the next year, 1815, the corn-laws were enacted to restore them to the

footing of luxurious living they had enjoyed during the wars, while the gleam of hope which thus momentarily broke upon the poor laborer, was again extinguished.

And thus, for another thirty years, the landlords of England were enabled to riot in extravagance, while the laboring man was compelled by law to pay double for the bread which constituted almost his entire living, without any material change of wages. Occasionally, a deficient harvest would raise the price of breadstuffs so high as to render the corn-laws inoperative, even to 90*s.* or 100*s.* per quarter, when his only alternative was to do double work, and that sad expedient only had the effect to lessen the demand for labor, and by reaction to depreciate its reward.

For more than half a century previous to the repeal of the corn-laws then, were the revenues of the landed aristocracy of England thus kept a hundred per cent. above their natural level, to the cost of the laboring man, as well as of all other classes of the community.

Previous to the commencement of the period of which I am speaking, land rents were more than one hundred per cent. lower than during that period. In 1790, says Porter, farms in Essex county, which rented at 10*s.* an acre, have never rented since for less than 20*s.* an acre, and, during the wars, sometimes rose to 50*s.* per acre. In Berkshire and Wiltshire, farms which at that time rented for 14*s.* per acre, have never fallen below 30*s.* per acre since, and have risen as high as 70*s.*, the lowest amount being 114 per cent. advance. In Staffordshire, rents were previously only 8*s.*, the lowest since 20*s.*, being a hundred and fifty per cent.

advance,—and these are but specimens of the advance in the whole kingdom.

And while the landlords have thus realized more than a hundred per cent. advance of rent during this period, they have had fifty to one hundred per cent. less to pay for all manufactured goods, while the advantage to the laborer from this latter source has been but small, as he only puts on clothing to cover his nakedness, nearly all his wages being absorbed in bread, house rent, shoes, and fuel.

Upon the repeal of the corn-laws in 1845, a new era opened upon the country, a new cry had to be raised, and some new measure adopted to meet the exigency. The country was proclaimed ruined, and in many instances laborers were refused employment, and sent to the poor-house, to make out a case against free-trade. Landlords and tenants united in one vigorous effort to effect a re-enactment of the corn-laws. To this end, meetings were held all over the kingdom; and O what faces were made up, and what touching appeals were made by the landlords to the better feelings of the people in behalf of their suffering condition, deprived as they were of a portion of the means they before enjoyed of making themselves nuisances! The sufferings of the laborer in being deprived of the cheap loaf, O that was nothing, he was used to it, and had no more feeling about it than a beast! But how could they, with the habits and style of living to which they had been born, and in which they had always indulged, submit to such a curtailment? And then the dignity of the nation was at stake, and how would its honor trail in the dust, if they were

necessitated to reduce their establishments, and set bounds to their profligacy? And the tenant-farmers, like so many dolts, instead of standing up like men, and demanding a reduction of rent, with few exceptions, whined out their sympathies for their masters, with as servile a devotion as though they had still been vassals, and liable to be knocked down by them with impunity, as in the feudal ages.

At some of the meetings, the landlord would not only whine and entreat, but would try what virtue there was in threats. One of these scenes, as related to me on good authority, was ludicrous enough. The Duke of R. arose, and after the customary tender appeals, said, that if, after all, the free-traders persisted in the ground they had taken, and the corn-laws were not reinstated, he for one should leave the country, and go where he could have his rights protected. True to his instincts, a tenant-farmer arose after him, and said the Duke had 'spressed his mind exactly, and he should leave the country too. Upon which a poor laborer (who seems to have been an exception to the generality of his class) arose and said, "Wall, I 'spose if you all goes and leaves the country, you won't takes the land with you." I only give the story as it was told to me in all seriousness by a respectable man, and it is certainly a good one, and significant.

The tug of war came in 1852, (and I was in the midst of it,) the momentous question, big with the fate of the landlords of England, was now to be settled, by a septennial election of the House of Commons. And never was I in such a "hubbub" before. The kingdom, from one end to

the other, thundered and reverberated with inflammatory appeal, heart-moving appeal, and all sorts of appeal; the doors of spirit and ale houses were thrown wide open, and the candidates footed the bills without asking a question, while money by the cart-load was forthcoming to buy votes; fisticuffs, knocking down and dragging out, shoutings, groans and blood, all contributed their share to make up the horrid features of that election scene. But, alas! alas! all would not do, protection was declared dead, the poor, starving wretch held on to his cheap loaf, while landlords and tenants went moodily to their homes—but they did not leave the country.

So astonishing has been the increase of the manufactur ing and commercial interests of the kingdom, especially of the former, within the last thirty years, that the landlords and their dependants find themselves in a very small minority, not constituting probably more than one-fourth the population of the kingdom at this time. And I suppose it must be admitted, that the manufacturers of the kingdom went for free-trade in both corn and manufactured goods, not so much from sympathy for the workingman, as from self-interest, hoping in cheapening provisions to cheapen labor; and as they had no longer any thing to fear from foreign competition, they could safely make a show of liberality in admitting foreign fabrics.

And what a spectacle is here! The landlords of the kingdom, compared to the whole population, stand as 1 to 800; and yet, this small number of persons have had the power, for so long a time, to subject the millions of their

fellow-citizens to a most galling tribute, to enable them to carry out their extravagances. It was not enough that they had fallen into indolent possession of estates, which, at half the rents demanded, would support them in independent ease. To increase their princely revenues, and furnish them the means of unrestrained indulgence, government aid must be invoked, and as they themselves have constituted the government, government aid was very readily granted.

And no thanks to any redeeming spirit abroad in the land, that the yoke was thrown off. A great counteracting moneyed interest had risen up in the large commercial and manufacturing towns, and to this the landed interest had to bow. It was this great antagonistic interest which led the way, and under whose banners the hungry masses beneath them, political ciphers as they were, carried terror to the very doors of Parliament.

These hungry masses were used to hunt down the landlords, by the great moneyed interests of the large towns, for their own benefit, just as their own greyhounds are used to hunt down the game.

The repeal of the corn-laws then, as a triumph of the humbler classes, must be received with very many abatements. It was capital which repealed the corn-laws, the capital which has accumulated in the manufacturing and commercial towns, and it was a mere piece of good luck with the poor starving laborer, that his cry for bread was made available in the contest, to the triumph of repeal.

This result shows that power is centering in the large towns, because capital is centering there; but, after all, it

has been but sparingly used—no farther, in fact, than was necessary to relieve town capitalists from the tribute to which they were subjected. In the general, it may be said, that their interest is so far identified with that of the landlord, that the poor laborer has little to hope from that source.

After all, good will come out of these mighty movements. The workingman has had a taste of the cheap loaf; something has been done to make him sensible of his power, and possibly, to some extent, to infuse into him the elements of self-respect, and it may be, that by slow degrees he will come to feel himself a man.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

THE PLEA THAT THE LANDLORD'S RENTS ARE SCARCELY SUFFICIENT TO PAY HIM A FAIR INTEREST, CONSIDERED.

TELL the landlord that he is taking from the laborer his just earnings, and he will very complacently say to you, that he does not get a fair rate of interest on the value of his land. The tenant-farmer will say the same thing in his behalf; and in fact, the whole British Empire will consider that a good and solid argument for starving the poor working-man.

But let us look into the philosophy, the ethics, and the christianity of this matter a little. In the first place, here is an arbitrary value fixed upon the land, and then an arbitrary rate of interest is fixed upon that arbitrary value, the whole being adjusted to the landlord's arbitrary style of living. To raise this arbitrary rate of interest, the landlord must impose an arbitrary rent to correspond; but the tenant-farmer cannot pay it, and support his own style of living, unless he takes all the laborer's earnings, leaving him but a half-starved existence. According to English ideas, all this is necessary to give the man his interest, and enable him to support his style of living. But suppose the laborer

refuses to work at all, who is to pay the landlord's interest in that case? Do you say he must work or die? Very good; but suppose he chooses death as the least of the two evils, can the landlord interpose and compel him to live on, that he may grind his interest out of him?

No, no, that is not the way; there are several parties to the affair, all equally "free-born Englishmen," and it would be no greater piece of insolence in the laborer than in the landlord, to claim the whole loaf, nor, in some aspects of the matter, would it look so bad.

Something like this I conceive to be a just view of the matter. Here is a branch of industry, which, according to English ideas, requires three parties to carry it on, the landlord, the tenant-farmer, and the laborer. The bones, sinews, and muscles of the latter, are the capital he puts into the concern, while the tenant-farmer supplies stock, implements, superintendence, etc. But without the laborer's capital, that of both the landlord and tenant-farmer would be worthless. The laborer then, in some sense, is the most important man in the concern, and yet he is turned off with nothing—nothing but his board, and *such* board! He toils for less than he would receive as a slave.

How manifest is it, that as one of the high contracting parties in this matter, the laborer should come in for his share of the profits? His coarse and scanty food, and the rags which cover him, are nothing. Hogs have to be fed, horses blanketed, and wheels have to be oiled; and so does the laborer have to be fed and clad, after some sort, to make his labor available to the landlord and tenant-farmer—that

is all. Emphatically then may it be said, that the entire dividend of the concern goes to the landlord and tenant-farmer, while the poor laborer is deprived of his entire earnings, and he the most important man in the concern, the man who *creates* all.

If either party is to fix a specified value upon the capital he puts in, it should be the laborer first of all. The question then to begin with is, not what land in England is worth, upon the supposition that laborers work for nothing, but what is it worth after putting a fair value upon the labor necessary to work it? The dividend, in that case, would show what would be a fair rate of interest on the landlord's capital; that is, the dividend which results to the landlord after allowing to both the tenant and the laborer a fair profit upon their investments. That would determine what his land is worth, and what would be an equitable rate of interest.

But that does not suit British ethics, and British christianity, and is an outrage upon British order. All these require that the laborer should be a nullity in the transaction, and that the landlord's style of living should be the standard by which to estimate the value of his land, and the amount of rent to which he is entitled, though the laborer starve, and the tenant-farmer become bankrupt, and the whole British empire bows down and says, *Amen!*

For thirty years, as I have shown, the nation was subjected to a most degrading tribute by the imposition of the corn-laws, to pay the interest money of these eight hundred landholders. But this was not enough; to make out the

necessary amount, not only must the whole nation be laid under tribute, but the entire capital of the laborer must be pressed into the service of the landlord, leaving him to destitution and want, and often the capital of the tenant-farmer was absorbed too.

In the organization of civil society, it has always been admitted as a fundamental principle, that, in return for the protection it affords, all those individual natural rights which conflict with the greatest good of the whole, should be surrendered. I know not but it is upon this principle, that the landlords claim, and the nation awards them, the privilege of taking the entire earnings of the laborer. They may, for aught I know, contend, that it is essential to the dignity of the nation, and therefore for its good, that the landlord be enabled to keep up his style of living, though the laborer starve, and the tenant-farmer come out penniless—and, for aught I know, the poor stultified laborer, and the submissive and very amiable tenant-farmer, may subscribe to the doctrine. And, I may say, there are multitudes of them who do subscribe to it in full.

What a strange obliquity of vision! Though the nation has thrown off the yoke, and refuses to pay tribute longer, yet all seem to concede the right of the landlord to the laborer's entire earnings, as essential to the general good, and, if need be, to the use of the entire capital of the tenant-farmer.

According to our republican ideas, this is rather a "hard row to hoe," rather an exorbitant demand in return for the protection of society. Such ideas of the greatest good of the whole, do not harmonize with our notions of things.

The first object of inquiry with our people would be, not what was necessary to support a landlord in a certain specified style of idle and luxurious living—not what amount of interest a landlord ought to receive, according to any standard established among men of any country; but what is he justly entitled to as an equitable share in the joint concern—a question which, so far as my information extends, has never yet been asked in England.

No, no; the landlord must have his pound of flesh, and both tenant and laborer agree to the claim, whatever may become of themselves, and all the people bow to the verdict.

But the tenant-farmer is in a very different situation from the poor laboring man. In the first place, it is optional with him whether to engage in the business or not, and, as a general thing, if he is sharp enough to look out for himself, he has as fair a prospect of a profitable investment, as he would have in any other branch of business, provided he does not undertake to play the lord too much himself. Large amounts are often vested in tenant-farming, as a matter of speculation, and with good management and good luck, it often proves a profitable one: but with bad management and a little bad luck, it frequently results in ruin. Success depends very much on the judgment and good sense exercised in converting manure into crops.

The repeal of the corn-laws was designed as a blow to the landlords only, and had not the tenant-farmers been so foolish as to take their part, they would not have suffered at all, for their rents would have come down with the price of grain.

But with all the alleged distress among tenant-farmers, still, such is the demand for farms, that no sooner is it known that there is one to rent, than there are numbers of applicants for it, sometimes scores of them. I have known cases where there were 50 or 60 applicants for a single farm, *since the repeal of the corn-laws*, many of them occupying two or three farms already, their entire object being speculation. And yet these same persons were joining in the cry of distress raised by the landlords.*

Although, then, there are many cases of real distress among the tenant-farmers, from high rents and from bad management, *they* are not the ones that feel the woes of the landlord system principally. It is from the poor working man alone, as a general thing, that all is taken. Corn-laws, or no corn-laws, high rents or low rents, it is all the same to him. It is no matter of speculation with him, nor is it optional with him, whether to engage with his master or not; he must do it or die.

* There are various causes besides those above mentioned, which have contributed to the distress of many tenant-farmers. Multitudes of them are so confiding, that they will expend a good portion of their fortune in the improvement of the soil, leaving it in the power of the landlord to raise the rent in proportion, or turn them off, and take the whole advantage of the improvement. And in cases where the landlord is perfectly honorable, his death often leaves the tenant-farmer in the hands of a successor, who claims the entire benefit of the improvement. I have known some cases of great hardship of that kind.

CHAPTER XXXV.

HOPE FOR ENGLAND.

In the evolutions of Providence, a train of causes has been put in operation, which bids fair to drive the ploughshare of reform, deep and radical, right through the rotten institutions of this island.

I have already quoted high authority here to the effect, that the entire structure of society and of the government, according to the views of their most enlightened statesmen, rests upon the "ignorance, degradation, and *manageableness* of the masses;" and the entire prosperity of the country depends upon a system of cheap labor, which, in turn, depends upon a large surplus in the working classes; a condition of things, which, through the long centuries of the past, has never yet failed them.

But the wonderful breaking up now going on from the emigration movements, is foreshadowing results, of which the most far-reaching sagacity had never dreamed. The flight of Ireland to our shores, was rather chuckled over than lamented, but now that the stagnant masses in England have at last been aroused by the attractions from the gold-fields of Australia, and thousands in consequence are taking

their weekly departure, with almost a certainty that the mania will continue for years to come, a new face is put upon the affairs of this kingdom.

Hope has at last glimmered from the other side of the globe upon the vision of England's down-trodden masses; and under the quickening influence they begin to stir, and show signs of a higher consciousness than they had seemed to possess. The wages of the laborer are rising, rising, rising in England's market, and the effect will put all her great political economists to their wit's end, and *nonplus* all the far-reaching wisdom of her political chiefs.

And not only is the Australian movement thus unsettling the old foundations by lessening the supply of labor, and elevating it in the scale at home, but it is setting in operation causes in those ends of the earth, which send back a reacting influence equally hostile to the great moneyed interests of the kingdom, and equally subversive of the existing order of things.

From that region comes the immense quantities of fine wool, which supply the manufactories of England. But the gold mania is enticing away all the shepherds, so that instead of tending their flocks, they only add their own to the multitudes of hungry mouths that are consuming them. The cry of the ravenous miner for meat, enforced by the attractions of the glittering dust, will be sure to prevail over that of the British manufacturer for wool, and has already prevailed.

And who can set bounds to the results destined to be wrought out through the operation of these twin causes, generated one at each end of the emigrating movement,

greatly enhancing the cost of the raw material to the manufacturer, and of the labor to work it up, and equally affecting the price of labor in every other department? In the year 1851, when the Australian movement first commenced, I presented this view of the subject to an esteemed friend heavily interested in the manufacture of fine wool, and pointed out to him what seemed to me must be the result, which was precisely what is now following in the train; but he did not seem to be at all alarmed. The truth is, that these people have always been so accustomed to a standing order of things, from century to century, that they can scarcely perceive the possibility of any very radical change.

And now I will make bold to predict another sad consequence to the mother country from this movement. It will not be many years before the myriad hosts of Australia will throw off the yoke, and set up for independence, indications of which are not wanting even now. And when that is done, it will be another blow to British manufactures, by the loss of a free market to that extent, which would by no means be inconsiderable.

There is another cause co-operating just now at home, of scarcely less potency in elevating the price of labor. I refer to the fact, that since I have been in the country (1851 and 1852), money has been a drug, and that there has been little chance of employing it at all, except in some way to task human sinews, and turn human labor to account. The demand for capital created by the opening fields of enterprise every where presented in our rising country, is unknown in England; and where human labor is employed by capitalists

with us, it is not ordinarily so much from the expectation of making a profit by robbing it of its reward, as from the inducements presented by the legitimate gains of the enterprise, after allowing labor its full reward.

As I said, in these years, money has been a drug; and as labor had always been a drug, and these two drugs brought together in manufactories, have appeared to convert the former into something better, an immense amount of capital has taken that direction, and hundreds of new establishments have sprung up in the manufacturing districts. I was surprised to see the number of new buildings going up for manufacturing purposes, in Lancashire, Yorkshire, and other manufacturing districts, and at every stage in the process of erection, from the laying of the foundations to the finishing-touch of the trowel. In passing from Liverpool to Leeds, scores of them are to be seen, on the right hand and on the left. Multitudes of them are now in operation, and the increased demand thus occasioned for labor, acting in conjunction with the diminished supply from emigration, is producing quite a rise in the labor market, and throwing into derangement all the calculations of these shrewd financiers.

The consequence is as certain as the operation of those laws by which nations rise and fall. On the one hand, there follows a corresponding rise in the manufactured fabric, then the loss of a market, or greatly reduced profits to the manufacturer, and on the other, a growing feeling of self-respect and independence on the part of the laborer, together with longings for something better.

And to help the matter, the government, at this late hour, is likely to be shamed into some step for the education of the people, and an educated people would hardly submit to such enormities.

There is still another instrumentality which promises large results. It originated with the "anti-corn-law league," for the purpose of multiplying liberal votes, and is still increasing in power for good. I refer to the formation of associations for the purchase of lands, to be parcelled out among those who choose to become members, with a view to make themselves freeholders, entitled to a vote. Heretofore there seems to have been no possibility for a poor man to possess himself of a home he could call his own, from the fact that land could not be bought at all in small parcels, and if it could, the price would have exceeded the means at his command; whereas, these associations, purchasing it in large tracts, divide it out among the members in small lots, at the purchase price, which puts it in the power of almost any industrious and economical artisan, with a little self-denial, to procure a home, and thus entitle himself at the same time to the right of suffrage.

And the inducements thus held out to the humbler classes in the large towns to husband their resources, and put forth efforts to increase them, is having its effect. In the single town of Birmingham alone six hundred freeholds are reported thus to have been created.

The associations have extended far and wide over the kingdom, and, according to a report recently made, number more than one hundred, estimated to be capable of increas-

ing the number of votes 6000 annually, and still they are constantly multiplying and extending operations, so that scarcely a limit can be set to their achievements. And they have work enough before them, with five million *outsiders*, who are of no more account *politically* than the cattle.

At the same time, there is infused into the new-born freeholders a feeling of self-respect, and they are prepared to stand up like men in defence of their rights. The reckless and prodigal are thus drawn from the vortex of dissipation which is ingulfing their little earnings while their families are left to suffer, and are made to feel the invigorating and regenerating influence of hope.

And I see not why this instrumentality alone may not, in time, overturn entirely the existing order of things. The only difficulty that seems to be in the way, is the getting hold of sufficient land to accomplish it, as the landholders, of course, are in the opposite interest. But that can be done, and I suppose is done, *under cover*, so as not to excite suspicion in reference to the object.

The number of voters now cannot exceed a million, and among them are a goodly number of *free men;* and it seems to me that the prospect of increasing that number by means of this instrumentality, so as to give the liberal cause a preponderating influence at the polls, is rather encouraging.

To these considerations it may be added, that the influence of our institutions is exerting increasing power here, from year to year. Already their stability and value have been tested by an experience of more than three-quarters of a century, and every year which passes over our heads

brings along with it its contribution to the stock of our influence. The tone of ridicule and contempt, and I may add, of coarse ribaldry, which has heretofore characterized the Tory publications towards us, has abated, and to some extent it has been awed into manifestations of respect; while the liberal papers are becoming bolder, and more and more deeply imbued with the spirit of our institutions. A vast luminary has arisen upon the other side of the Atlantic, which is shedding its mild and benignant, its cheering and inspiring rays upon these distant countries, and the darkness of ages is fleeing away before it.

It is very true, that they have all so much to unlearn, so many old associations to fling to the winds, such spells to break away from, and such tides of evil influence setting in upon them from every quarter to resist and overcome, that it is by no means strange that the best of them should appear to us but half awake.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

TRIBUTE TO THE MEMORY OF PEEL—HIS ACHIEVEMENTS OVER PRIVILEGE AND POWER.

I SHOULD do injustice to the subject of these pages, were I to pass in silence the achievements over privilege and power of that extraordinary man, Sir Robert Peel. And indeed I could scarcely refrain from some notice of the blessings he bestowed upon his countrymen, after having witnessed the popular demonstration of regard for him on occasion of the recent inauguration of a bronze statue to his memory at Leeds.

And here I take occasion to say, in reference to statues, pictures, &c., that I have purposely avoided all allusion to the sculpture galleries and picture galleries I have visited, high-wrought descriptions of which make so large a figure in the diaries of many American tourists—not because I did not admire them as the productions of human genius, and the noblest triumphs of art (for I could stand all day over a statue or a painting from the hand of a master), but because, until now, it has not comported with my design, nor now, any further than to say, that I have been thoroughly disgusted with the prostitution of these divine arts in these

old countries, to the great work of human oppression, insomuch that it is my humble conviction that they have done far more to *degrade* than to elevate and refine mankind.

There is something in the master-pieces of statuary and painting, which strikes the beholder with awe, and draws forth his homage, as to objects supernatural and divine. The greatest oppressors are thus made objects of veneration, and of almost idolatrous regard to the masses who grovel at their feet. And how easy a thing it is to transfer the homage due the great God himself to objects from which such a mysterious spell is shed down. Often have I turned away in disgust from the great master-pieces of these arts, solely from the associations thus connected with them.

I confess that I had seen so much prostitution of this sort in this kingdom, so many "graven images" set up, as a Leeds journal has it, and especially in the metropolis, that I could scarcely regard with complacency the movement made to raise a statue to the memory even of so great a benefactor of his country as Sir Robert Peel—a man so raised above the highest level of humanity here, that he cast an indignant rebuke upon all such attempts to deify him while he lived, seeking only to raise a memorial to his fame in the hearts of his countrymen; and satisfied to leave to those who had nothing else to rely upon, the fruitless attempt to borrow immortality from the crumbling marble.

This trait in the man, together with the deep and throbbing response of humanity for the good service he had done it, in defiance of privilege and power, of which this statue was to be a testimonial, allayed all my disgust, overcame all my

antipathies, and inspired me with a reverence as sincere, and an interest as thrilling, as were so signally manifested by the humble children of want, as they pressed in countless thousands upon the scene, to gaze upon the features of their great benefactor, as delineated in the bronze statue before them. From the pedestal on which it stood, it seemed to look down upon them in dignified compassion.

When the covering was first withdrawn from it, a deep sea of emotion seemed to heave the mighty mass, breaking forth in audible, though subdued, half-suppressed expression, as though from a sense of reverence. It did me good to mingle with the crowd, witness the intensity of their feelings, and listen to the expressions of gratitude which broke from the lips of the humbler classes. One poor woman, after telling what he had done, exclaimed, with tears in her eyes, and an emphasis I shall never forget, "*And the children are yet to be born that you may tell it to!*"

And what had he done? All that was possible to be done for his oppressed countrymen, he gave the energies of his great intellect and powerful influence to accomplish. He revised and modified the whole financial system, so as to transfer, as far as possible, the burdens of taxation from the poor to the rich;* and when the fearful crisis came which

*Sir Robert had a storm of obloquy to encounter from the landlords and capitalists generally, for his efficiency in getting through the Income Tax Bill, vulgarly called his "Money Bill," which levied a tax of sixpence per pound sterling on all income, from whatever source dervived—a measure of absolute necessity to save the country from bankruptcy, and the government from

was to decide the fate of the great measure of corn-law repeal, he brought all the power of his mighty influence to its aid, although he was himself a landholder, and largely interested to defeat it. At the same time, he very modestly disclaimed any share in the credit of that triumph, and awarded it all to Mr. Cobden, although it is hardly possible that it could have been carried had he taken an attitude of resistance.

He, as a matter of course, had been a protectionist; so that in going for the measure he not only abandoned his own private interests, but had to encounter a storm of obloquy and reproach from his brother landlords, who branded him as a turn-coat, and a traitor to their interests, and charged him, at the same time, with the basest ingratitude, for having deserted them after they had "taken him up" and hoisted him into power; but he stood firm as the rock amid the ocean waves.

And he was equally unmoved by the favors they had to bestow. Repeatedly he turned his back upon the peerage, and refused to have it, though pressed upon his acceptance; and not only so, but he recorded a solemn protest in his will

dissolution. The country was actually bankrupt, and had nothing to meet the demands of its bondholders for their interest. All hearts misgave; and the question was upon every lip, What shall be done to save the country? At this fearful crisis, while all were "sore afraid" in view of impending ruin, this great man came boldly forward with his bill, and carried it triumphantly, to the salvation of the country. The bill was not perfect, but as perfect, probably, as it could have been made under the circumstances.

against its acceptance by any of his sons, should it be offered them.

As the first minister of the crown, he made peers of others, but withstood the blandishment, and remained a commoner himself; and what a spectacle, to see the proud aristocracy of England prostrate at his feet, marquisses begging to be made dukes, earls begging to be made marquisses, viscounts begging to be made earls, baronets begging to be made viscounts, and esquires begging to be made baronets, while he himself, by the simple force of his character, rose above them all, and put all such things away from him as the baubles of children, and that in a country where regard for rank and title rises to idolatry! Wonderful man! What a spectacle of moral sublimity! See him rejecting and trampling under his feet as dross what England's proud peers value themselves upon alone, and what her servile masses bow down to in low worship, and, at the same time, encountering the reproaches of those lofty ones, when he might have secured their smiles and their caresses, and have found his own private interests every way promoted by it besides! How contemptible the fling from these illustrious ones, that he was ungrateful!

Few of this class of persons made their appearance on that occasion; it had no attractions for them. Indeed there is every reason to believe, that the sad event which deprived the country of this great man, and spread mourning and sorrow through the habitations of the poor, was hailed with gladness by them, as bringing deliverance from an influence which they dreaded, and which they had every reason to dread; for the reforms he had already effected, were but pre-

paratory to still greater ones which he contemplated. I have given, in another place, the remark made to me by a distinguished member of parliament, that he fully intended to abolish the hereditary peerage, and his expressed conviction that he would have accomplished it, had his life been spared a few years longer. Much as he was appreciated by the middle and lower classes, little did they know the loss they sustained in his death.

And besides all that is said above of his high-souled magnanimity, he knew full well, that even if he was successful in carrying the corn-law repeal, it would work his downfall from power. It did work his downfall; but how small a consideration was that to him! Descending from his high position as the first minister of the crown, with calm, unruffled dignity, and retiring to his farm, he devoted himself to the improvements of agriculture with the same zeal, ability and success, with which he had guided the destinies of the nation; and, but for the mysterious providence which deprived the country of his services, he would soon again have been called to the helm of state, and have had the opportunity to carry out his great designs for the good of his country.

I certainly regard it a privilege to have seen the statue of such a man,—one which is pronounced true to the great original. It presents one of the noblest specimens of "the human face divine" I have ever seen. He is represented as standing with a scroll in his hand, in the attitude in which he usually addressed the House of Commons, with a calm, thoughtful dignity upon his brow, benignity in his countenance, and eloquence upon his lips.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

CONCLUDING REFLECTIONS.

Are these things so? Is such the character, and such the tendency of British constitutional government? Is it true, that it is as far from dispensing blessings to the mass of the people, and as effectual an engine to crush them, as the most despotic governments of Europe? Does it create the necessity which dooms the multitude to degrading servitude and hopeless destitution? Does the same vicious system produce the same vicious effects upon the poor working-man, whether he be a serf, or "a free-born Englishman," under the broad protection of Magna Charta—whether the country be "overstocked with inhabitants," as they would make us believe it is now, or *understocked*, as it was half a century ago, when there was less than half the present population? Is it true, that the education of the people has hitherto been regarded as dangerous to the institutions of the country, and ignorance and degradation as their only sure foundations? Is it true, that the influence of the favored few upon all the orders below has been for evil, and only evil, and that continually—and that, so far from there being similarity in the institutions of the two countries, there is only contrast in every thing which pertains to the great ends of government?

Are these things so? Then how little reason have these people to boast of their institutions as compared with those of their continental neighbors! What face can they have to open their mouths about continental despotism, exposed as they are to the taunt, "*What do ye more than others?*" How much better than despotism is a system whose effects upon human character and human destiny are not distinguishable from those produced by despotism itself? And where, among all the despotisms of Europe, are the people bowed down under a heavier weight of taxation, and so pauperized as in this land of constitutional liberty? Nowhere; not one single continental state has made such proficiency in the work of pauperizing its people as this kingdom: she is in advance of them all. [See Porter's Progress of the Nation, vol. ii., page 113.]

And yet they would have us admire their free institutions as the model of our own, and talk with wonderful self-complacency about the oppressions of continental despotism. God forbid, that I should say any thing to shield continental despotism from merited reprobation, or to disparage in the slightest degree the feeblest development of constitutional liberty—that sort which blesses the people.

If they want us to recognize them as fathers, brothers, or as the Times has it, *cousins;* if they would have us, as a free people, extend to them the hand of fellowship, then let them show us by their behavior that they are worthy of it. Let them show us the appropriate fruits of free institutions; let them point us to what their institutions have done for the people to entitle them to our regards as kindred to

our own, and as distinguishing them from those of the rankest despotism; and in order to this, it is not sufficient to talk about *habeas corpus*, by which a poor wretch may be dragged out of jail, where he has found a refuge from starvation.

Then will we believe; then will we raise a hallelujah for old England, and delight to mingle our sympathies with hers, and do her honor.

Are these things so? Then what a value should we put upon the institutions of our country? Nor would ours be a mere empty boast; for there are the evidences, and to them we can make a triumphant appeal. Previous to the rise of our own, there was very little choice among the governments of the earth, judging them by their effects upon the well-being of the race. All, whether nominal republics, constitutional monarchies, or absolute despotisms, are reduced, by the application of this test, substantially to one common level; for all alike had been employed only to degrade, pauperize, and brutalize the masses, to furnish the means of luxurious indulgence to the favored few, and all the world said, *Amen!*

Favored, happy people! may you prove worthy the sacred trust, and the distinguished blessings you enjoy be diffused abroad, through the influence of your high example, among all the nations of the earth, and perpetuated from generation to generation, down to the winding up of this earthly scene!

But to make our influence tell upon the nations of the earth, we must put away every thing which serves to impede

the working, or mar the effect of our institutions. To neutralize their influence, and justify themselves, these people are keen to discover all such blemishes, and they spare no pains to make all the capital possible out of them, shutting their eyes to the broad distinction, that the character and tendency of *their* institutions is to *produce* the evils of which I have spoken, while the character and tendency of *ours* is to *destroy* the evils with which they taunt us—quite a difference, truly! In the one case, the evils in question are the spontaneous outgrowth of a vicious system, and in the other, they are but fungous excresences, which the healthful development of the system itself will shed off.

This book will be legitimate game for the tory presses of England, should it ever rise to the dignity of falling into their hands; and it really has the presumption to cherish such an expectation, nor does it shrink from the ordeal. It knows full well with what ferocity it will be assailed, what charges of *stupid ignorance, conceited prejudice, and gross error*, will be heaped upon its hapless author; and it would not be surprised if minions of the British throne in our own country should open their batteries upon it. But it is not afraid; girded in the panoply of truth, and sustained by "the conscience of the world," it goes forth upon its mission, deeply impressed with a sense of the importance of the message it bears. It throws down no gauntlet, and boasts of no infallibility, but very respectfully presents itself for a hearing.

THE END.

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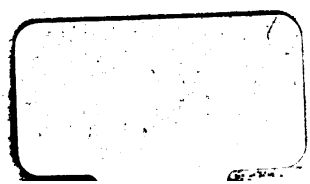
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